THE CHARACTER OF THE BEARERS AND PEOPLE OF THE QUR'AN

أخلاق حملة القرآن وأهله

تأليف

الإمام أبي بكر محمد بن الحسين الآجري

المتوفى ٣٦٠ هـ

A translation of

AKHLAQ HAMALAH AL-QURAN WA AHLIH

by

Imam Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Ajurri (d. 360 H)

Al-Quran Society جمعية القرآن

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Translation: Usama Hasan

Under the supervision of: Shaykh Suhaib Hasan

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PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon the Final Messenger, Muhammad, and his family and companions.

We are pleased to present to the respected reader an English translation of a precious book, *The Character of the Bearers and People of the Qur'an*, by an outstanding Imam, author of *Al-Shari'ah*, Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Ajurri, who passed away in 360 H in Makkah al-Mukarramah.

Although this book is small in size, it contains great meanings and describes beautiful qualities that all bearers of the Noble Qur'an should adopt, whether they are reciters, preservers, Qur'an-teachers or callers to Allah. There is no doubt that lofty morals occupy an important position in building the Muslim nation and preparing it to guide people and direct them towards what will reform their world and Hereafter. Similarly, base morals are a sign of the collapse of nations and a cause of their weakness and humiliation. The poet Hafiz Ibrahim has spoken truthfully when he said:

Nations are nothing but morals:
If their morals disappear, they disappear.

Moral corruption of the bearers of the religion, particularly the bearers of the Qur'an, leads to corruption of the religion. When religion becomes corrupted, the yardsticks of life and the scales of nobility are ruined, and thus the whole society is devastated. How excellent are the poet's words:

No-one has corrupted the world but kings,
Evil scholars and sinful ascetics!

As we present this book, we hope to participate in spreading virtue and knowledge. I am pleased to say that the book has been rendered into English by my son, Hafiz Dr. Usama Hasan, for whom, as well as for the respected reader, we pray for every capability from Allah, Most High, All-Powerful.

Suhaib Hasan 'Abdul Ghaffar
Chairman, Al-Qur'an Society.
4th Ramadan, 1423 / 9th November, 2002.

With the Name of Allah, Most Merciful, Ever-Merciful

About the Author

His Life

His full name was Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. 'Abdullah, Abu Bakr al-Ajurri al-Baghdadi. He was a Scholar of Hadith and Law, a pious Imam and trustworthy Follower of the Sunnah.

He was born around 264 or 280 H in Baghdad, where he hailed from its *Darb al-Ajurr* district (*Ajurr* is a fired brick used in building and construction), a locality on the west bank of the river that had produced several people of knowledge.[1] He was raised in Baghdad and studied with its people of knowledge before teaching Hadith there. He remained in his native city until the year 330 H, when he performed the pilgrimage to Makkah. Ibn al-Jawzi, Ibn 'Imad al-Hanbali, Ibn Khillakan and al-Subki relate that when al-Ajurri entered Makkah, may Allah protect it, he was extremely impressed by it and prayed, "O Allah! Grant me residence here for a year," upon which he heard the voice of an invisible caller say, "Rather, thirty years!" Al-Ajurri settled in Makkah after the pilgrimage and stayed there for the remaining thirty years of his life, dedicated to worship and the teaching of Hadith, until his death aged eighty (or ninety-six, according to some sources) on the first day of Muharram, 360 H. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi said that Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Suri said, "Abu Bakr al-Ajurri passed away in Muharram in the year three hundred and sixty – I read that on his gravestone in Makkah." It is also related that al-Ajurri used to often pray that he would not reach the sixtieth year (of the century).[2] He passed away just hours into the year 360 H.

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[1] Yaqut al-Hamawi said about it in his time, "It is now desolate." Cf. *Mu'jam al-Buldan* ("Compendium of the Lands") of Yaqut and *Wafayat al-A'yan* ("Dates of Death of Famous Personalities") of Ibn Khillakan.

[2] [Translator's note:] Al-Ajurri's prayer seems to be based on the famous one of the greatest Hadith-Preserver ever, the Companion Abu Hurayrah, "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the beginning of the sixtieth year, and from the leadership of children." His prayer was answered, for he passed away at the age of 78 in the year 57 or 58 or 59 H (authorities differ), before Yazid b. Mu'awiyah became Caliph in 60 H at the age of 35.

His Teachers

Al-Ajurri compiled a book entitled *Eighty Hadith from Eighty Shaykhs,* showing that he had at least this many Hadith teachers. Badr 'Abdullah al-Badr, in his introduction to al-Ajurri's *Forty Hadith,* names 79 of these teachers from seven of al-Ajurri's published works. These include the following as well as many of their contemporaries, some of whom feature in the narrations given in this book, and all of whom were famous Imams and Hadith-preservers mentioned by al-Dhahabi in his *Tabaqat* (or *Tadhkirat*) *al-Huffaz* ("Generations of Hadith-Preservers"):

1. Abu Muslim al-Kajji, Ibrahim b. 'Abdullah (d. 292 H)
2. Abu Shu'ayb al-Harrani
3. Khalaf b. 'Amr al-'Akbari
4. Ahmad b. Yahya al-Hulwani
5. Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Firyabi (d. 301 H)
6. Al-Fadl b. Muhammad al-Junadi (d. 308 H)
7. Ahmad b. 'Umar b. Zanjwayh al-Qattan ["the Cotton-Trader"] (d. 304 H)
8. Qasim b. Zakariyya al-Mutarriz ["the Embroiderer"] al-Baghdadi (d. 305 H)
9. Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi
10. Harun b. Yusuf b. Ziyad
11. Abu Bakr b. Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d. 316 H), whose father was the famous scholar of Hadith, author of the *Sunan.*

[His Students]

As for his students, they were numerous, especially due to his lengthy stay in Makkah in the latter half of his life. Many of the people of knowledge from both East and West narrated Hadith from him, as did many pilgrims and visitors to Makkah, and would journey to Makkah to learn from him. They included the following (many of whom are also listed by al-Dhahabi in his compilation of Hadith-preservers that also includes al-Ajurri and his teachers):

1. Abu l-Hasan al-Himmani
2. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Umar al-Nahhas ["the Coppersmith"]
3. Abu l-Husayn b. Bushran and his brother Abu l-Qasim (d. 403 H)

4. The Hafiz Abu Nu'aym al-Isbahani (d. 404 H), author of the famous *Hilyah al-Awliya'* ("Ornament of the Saints"), in which he transmitted many narrations on the authority of his Shaykh.
5. Mahmud b. 'Umar al-'Akbari
6. 'Ali b. Ahmad al-Muqri ["the Recitation-Teacher"], one of the narrators of the present book. Al-Khatib al-Baghadi transmitted many narrations from al-Muqri from al-Ajurri in his *Al-Faqih wa l-Mutafaqqih* ("The Scholar and Student of Law"). Al-Khatib also mentioned in his *Tarikh Baghdad* ("History of Baghdad") that narrators numbered 2-6 in this list transmitted to him from al-Ajurri, with whom they had studied in Makkah.
7. Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. al-Fadl al-Qattan ["the Cotton-Trader"]
8. Muhammad b. Khalifah, from whom the Hafiz Abu 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr transmits narrations of al-Ajurri in his *Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm wa Fadlih* ("Explanation of Knowledge and its Virtue").

The Scholars' Praise for al-Ajurri

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, al-Sam'ani, Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Dhahabi, Ibn Kathir and Ibn Khillakan all wrote biographies of al-Ajurri and praised his piety, character and scholarship.

His *Madhhab* (School of Law)

Authorities have differed about al-Ajurri's school of law. Ibn Khillakan, Taj al-Din al-Subki, Yaqut al-Hamawi, Ibn al-Nadim, al-Safadi, al-Asnawi and Ibn al-Ahdal said that al-Ajurri was Shafi'i. Al-Nablusi, Ibn 'Imad al-Hanbali and al-Taqi al-Fasi said that al-Ajurri was Hanbali.

Muhammad Sa'id 'Umar Idris, in his introduction to al-Ajurri's *Tahrim al-Nard wa l-Shatranj wa l-Malahi* ("Prohibition of Backgammon, Chess and Idle Entertainment"), says, "That which is apparent to us, and Allah knows best, is that he was *mujtahid* (capable of independent judgment in Law) and not restricted to a specific *Madhhab*: he would follow the legal evidence wherever it went. This was why the authorities differed, leading scholars of each *Madhhab* claiming him as their own. Whoever studies his books *Al-Shari'ah* ["The Sacred Law"] and *Akhlaq al-'Ulama'* ["The Character of the People of Knowledge"] will see clearly that al-Ajurri was an independent thinker, opposing *Madhhab*-based partisanship."

[His Works]

These include the following, as mentioned in the sources given:

1. *Ahkam al-Nisa'* ("Commandments for Women") – Ibn al-Nadim's *Fihrist*.[3]
2. *Akhbar 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz* ("Tales of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz") – publ. Mu'assasah al-Risalah, ed. Dr. 'Abdullah 'Abd al-Rahim 'Usaylan, Beirut, 1979.
3. *Akhlaq Ahl al-Birr wa l-Taqwa* ("The Character of the People of Piety and Righteousness") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
4. *Akhlaq Hamalah al-Qur'an wa Ahlih* ("The Character of the Bearers and People of the Qur'an"), which is this book, published at least three times in Arabic: Beirut, 1986, ed. Muhammad 'Amr b. 'Abd al-Latif; Baghdad, 1989, ed. Dr. Ghanim Qiduri Hamd; Beirut, 1412/1992, ed. Bassam 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Jabi.
5. *Akhlaq al-'Ulama'* ("The Character of the People of Knowledge"), published several times: Cairo (1931) and Damascus (1972), ed. Faruq Hammadah; Riyadh (1978), ed. Shaykh Isma'il al-Ansari; Kuwait, ed. Badr 'Abdullah al-Badr.
6. *Adab al-Nufus* ("Etiquettes of the Souls") – Sezgin.
7. *Al-'Arba'un al-Ajurriyyah* ("Forty Hadith of Ajurri") – publ. Kuwait, 1987, ed. Badr 'Abdullah al-Badr.
8. *Awsaf al-Sab'ah Alladhina Yuzilluhum Allah fi Zillih* ("Attributes of the Seven whom Allah will Shade under His Shade") – mentioned by al-Ajurri in his *Forty Hadith* (no. 7 above).
9. *Bab Dhikr al-Amr bi Luzum al-Jama'ah wa Tark al-Ibtida'* ("Chapter on the Command to Stick to the Community and Avoid Innovation") – mentioned by al-Albani in *Al-Muntakhab min Makhtutat al-Hadith* ("Selection of Hadith Manuscripts" [from the Zahiriyyah Library, Damascus]).
10. *Tahrim al-Liwat* ("Prohibition of Homosexuality") – mentioned by Ibn al-Qayyim in *Rawdat al-Muhibbin* ("Garden of the Lovers").

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[3] *Fihrist*: "Index" or "Catalogue."

11. *Tahrim al-Nard wa l-Shatranj wa l-Malahi* ("Prohibition of Backgammon, Chess and Idle Entertainment"), publ. Buraydah, Saudi Arabia, 1407 H, ed. 'Umar Ghuramah al-'Amuri.
12. *Al-Tasdiq bi l-Nazar ila Allah Ta'ala fi l-Akhirah wa ma A'adda li Awliya'ih* ("Confirmation of the Vision of Allah Exalted in the Hereafter, and what He has prepared for His Friends") – Sezgin.
13. *Taghyir al-Azminah* ("Changing of the Times") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
14. *Al-Tafarrud wa l-'Uzlah* ("Solitude and Seclusion") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
15. *Al-Tahajjud wa Fada'il Qiyam al-Layl* ("Tahajjud and the Virtues of Standing in Prayer at Night") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist* and al-Tajibi's *Barnamaj*.
16. *Al-Tawbah* ("Repentance") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
17. *Thamanun Hadithan 'an Thamanin Shaykhan* ("Eighty Hadith from Eighty Shaykhs") – al-Zirkili's *Al-A'lam* ("Famous Personalities"), ms., Rabat.
18. *Husn al-Khuluq* ("Excellence of Character") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
19. *Hikayat 'an al-Shafi'i wa ghayrih* ("Tales of al-Shafi'i and others") – Sezgin.
20. *Ruju' Ibn 'Abbas 'an al-Sarf* ("Ibn 'Abbas's Retraction on the Matter of Exchanging Gold for Gold") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
21. *Risalah al-Ajurri ila Ahl Baghdad* ("Ajurri's Letter to the People of Baghdad") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
22. *Al-Shubuhat* ("Misconceptions") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
23. *Sharh Qasidah al-Sijistani fi l-'Aqidah* ("Commentary on Sijistani's Ode regarding Doctrine") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist*.
24. *Al-Shari'ah* ("The Sacred Law") – al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah Press, Cairo, 1369 H, ed. Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi.
25. *Sifah al-Ghuraba' min al-Mu'minin* ("Description of the Strangers amongst the Believers") – publ. Kuwait, 1983, ed. Badr 'Abdullah al-Badr.
26. *Sifah Qabr al-Nabi sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam* ("Description of the Grave of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace") – *Kashf al-Zunun* and *Hadyah al-'Arifin*.

27. *Fard Talab al-'Ilm* ("The Obligation of Seeking Knowledge") – Sezgin.
28. *Fadl al-'Ilm* ("Virtues of Knowledge") – *Ibn Khayr's Fihrist.*
29. *Al-Fawa'id al-Muntakhabah 'an Abi Shu'ayb al-Harrani wa ghayrih* ("Selected Matters of Benefit from Abu Shu'ayb al-Harrani and others") – Sezgin.
30. *Qissah al-Hajar al-Aswad wa Zamzam wa Bad' Sha'niha* ("The Story of the Black Stone and Zamzam, and the Beginning of their Matter") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist.*
31. *Qiyam al-Layl wa Fadl Qiyam Ramadan* ("Standing in Prayer at Night, and Virtues of Standing at Night in Ramadan") – Ibn Khayr's *Fihrist.*
32. *Lubab Kitab al-Qadr* ("Essence of the Book of Destiny") – mentioned in al-Ajurri's *Al-Shari'ah* (no. 24 above).
33. *Ma Warada fi Laylah al-Nisf min Sha'ban* ("That which has been related regarding the Middle Night of Sha'ban") – Sezgin.
34. *Mukhtasar al-Fiqh* ("Concise Fiqh") – Ibn al-Nadim's *Fihrist.*
35. *Mas'alah al-Jahr bi l-Qur'an fi l-Tawaf* ("The Issue of Reciting the Qur'an Loudly during Tawaf") – Sezgin.
36. *Kitab al-Mushaf: Mushaf 'Uthman bin 'Affan radi Allahu 'anhu* ("The Book of the Written Copies of the Qur'an: the Copy of 'Uthman b. 'Affan, may Allah be pleased with him") – mentioned in al-Ajurri's *Al-Shari'ah* (no. 24 above).
37. *Kitab al-Nasihah al-Kabir* ("The Great Book of Advice") – Ibn al-Nadim's *Fihrist.*
38. *Wusul al-Mushtaqin wa Nuzhah al-Mustami'in* ("Arrival of the Desirous and Enjoyment of the Listeners") – Sezgin.

With the Name of Allah, Most Merciful, Ever-Merciful

The Character of the Bearers and People of the Qur'an, and the Manners Befitting Them

Isnad of the Damascus Manuscript

- The reliable shaykh Abu Talib 'Abd al-Latif b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. Hamzah b. Faris al-Qubbayti informed us, with the text being read to him whilst we listened (and that was in several sittings, one of them being on the first day of the week [Sunday], the thirteenth of Shawwal in the year six hundred and thirty-nine [639]); he said:
- Abu l-Muzaffar 'Ali b. Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Karkhi informed us (and that was in Dhu l-Qa'dah in the year five hundred and sixty [560]); he said:
- Abu Bakr Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Turaythi informed us (and I read this back to him more than once after originally hearing it from him in Baghdad); he said:
- Abu l-Hasan 'Ali b. Ahmad b. 'Umar b. Hafs al-Muqri' al-Himmani informed us; he said:
- Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. 'Abdullah al-Ajurri, may Allah have mercy upon him, informed us in the Sacred Mosque in Makkah in the year three hundred and fifty-four (354), and this was read to him in the Sacred Mosque whilst I listened; he said: ...

Isnad of the Egyptian Manuscript

- The two reliable and righteous Shaykhs informed us: the Shaykh Taj al-Din Abu l-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Abu l-Fada'il al-'Akbari the Shafi'i Jurist and the Shaykh Kamal al-Din Abu Hafs 'Umar b. Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Husayn, grandson of the Shaykh, Imam, Scholar and Hafiz, Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim b. Muhammad b. al-Zajjaj, the text being recited to them whilst I listened. This was on Friday the sixteenth of the month of Rabi' al-Akhir in the year seven hundred and thirty-three (733) in the Salami Mosque, House of the Caliphate, East Baghdad. It was said to them:
- The Shaykh, Imam and Scholar, Majd al-Din Abu l-Fadl 'Abdullah b. Mahmud b. Mawdud b. Mahmud b. Baldaji informed you, with permission to transmit, and they confirmed this, continuing the isnad:
- The Shaykh, Imam and Righteous Ascetic, Abu Bakr Mismar b. 'Umar b. Muhammad b. al-'Uways al-Nayyar al-Muqri' al-Baghdadi informed us, reciting all of it to us; he said:
- Abu l-Fadl Muhammad b. Nasir b. Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Hafiz informed us, he said:
- Abu Bakr Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Turaythi informed us, he said:
- Abu l-Hasan 'Ali b. Ahmad b. 'Umar b. Hafs al-Himmani, Allah's Mercy be upon him, said:
- Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. 'Abdullah al-Ajurri, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: ...

Introduction

To proceed, I truly say, and in Allah I trust, seeking correctness in speech and action:

That by which speech most deserves to be begun is the Praise of Our Generous Master, and the Best Praise is that by which the Generous has praised Himself, so we also praise Him by it.

"Praise be to Allah, who revealed to His Slave the Book, and placed therein no crookedness: (making it) straight, to warn of a severe punishment from His presence, and to give glad tidings to the Believers who work righteous deeds that truly for them is an excellent reward. They will remain therein for ever!"[4]

"Praise be to Allah, to Whom belongs whatever is in the Heavens and whatever is in the Earth, and to Whom belongs Praise in the Hereafter. He is the Wise, Aware. He knows whatever enters the Earth and whatever springs forth from it, and whatever descends from the Sky and whatever ascends to it. He is the Ever-Merciful, Oft-Forgiving."[5]

I praise Him for His pre-existent Kindness and His overwhelming Favours, the praise of one who knows that his Generous Master taught him that which he would not have known, and that His Bounty upon him is Great. I ask Him for His increased Bounty, and to grant me gratitude for the Favours that He has bestowed, for truly He is the Possessor of Magnificent Bounty.

May Allah bless our master Muhammad, His Slave, His Messenger, His Prophet, His Trustee over His Revelation and His Slaves, with a blessing that will please Him and be a source of forgiveness for us, and may He bless all his family, and grant them great, pure peace. There is no Power except by Allah, Most High, Magnificent.

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[4] al-Kahf (The Cave), 18:1-3

[5] Saba' (Sheba), 34:1-2

Chapter One

Virtues of the Qur'an

Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Ajurri said:

Allah – Mighty and Majestic – revealed the Qur'an upon His Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and informed him of the virtue of that which He sent down to him. He also informed His creation, in His Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger, that the Qur'an is a protection for whoever holds fast to it, a guidance for whoever seeks guidance through it, richness for whoever avoids wordly riches through it, a shield from the Fire for whoever follows it, a light for whoever seeks illumination by it, a cure for what is in the chests, and a guidance and mercy for the Believers.

Moreover, Allah – Mighty and Majestic is His Name – commanded His creation to have faith in it and act by its command, so they must treat what it permits as permissible and what it prohibits as prohibited, they must have faith in its allegories, and they must take lessons from its similitudes, saying, "We have faith in it. It is all from our Lord."[6]

Further, He promised salvation from the Fire and entrance into the Garden for reciting it and acting by it. Further, He encouraged His creation, when reciting His Book, to ponder it deeply and reflect upon it with their hearts; and when they hear it from others, to listen to it in the most excellent manner; further, He promised them an unstinting reward for that, so to Him belongs all Praise. Furthermore, He informed His creation that whoever recites the Qur'an, intending to trade with his Generous Master, He recompenses him with a profit after which there is no profit, and He allows him to recognise the blessing of the trade in this world and the Hereafter.

Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All that I have mentioned and will mention, if Allah wills, is explained in the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic,

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[6] Al 'Imran (The Family of 'Imran), 3:7

and in the Way of His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), and from the statements of his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them and all people of knowledge. So I shall mention from this that which occurs to me to mention, if Allah Exalted wills, and Allah is the granter of capability for that.

Allah Exalted said, "Those who recite the Book of Allah, establish the Prayer and spend from the sustenance that We have granted them, secretly and openly, hope for a trade that will never fail: so that He may reward them fully, and increase them from His Bounty – truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Thankful."[7]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Truly, this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright, and gives glad tidings to the Believers who work righteous deeds that truly for them is a great reward, and that truly, those who do not have faith in the Hereafter, We have prepared for them a painful punishment."[8]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "We reveal from the Qur'an that which is a Cure and Mercy for the Believers, and which does not increase the wrong-doers, except in loss."[9]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "O mankind! There has come to you an Admonition from your Lord, a Cure for that which is in the chests, a Guidance and Mercy for the Believers."[10]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "O mankind! There has come to you a Proof from your Lord, and We have revealed to you a Clear Light. So as for those who have faith in Allah and hold fast to Him, He will admit them to Mercy and Grace from Himself, and He will guide them to Himself by a Straight Path."[11]

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[7] Fatir (Originator), 35:29-30

[8] al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:9-10

[9] al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:82

[10] Yunus (Jonah), 10:57

[11] al-Nisa' (Women), 4:174-5

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Hold fast to the Rope of Allah, all together, and do not be divided. And remember the Favour of Allah upon you, when you were enemies: He brought your hearts together, so you became, by His Favour, brothers. And you were upon the brink of a Pit of Fire, so He rescued you from it. Thus does Allah explain to you His Signs, that you may attain Guidance."[12] The Rope of Allah is the Qur'an.

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Allah has sent down the Best of Speech, a Book, Self-Consistent, Oft-Repeated. Creep from it do the skins of those who fear their Lord: then do their skins and their hearts soften towards the Remembrance of Allah. That is the Guidance of Allah – He guides by it whomsoever He wishes; and whomsoever Allah misguides, he has no guide!"[13]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "A Book, We have sent it down to you, Blessed, that they may ponder its Signs deeply, and that People of Understanding may reflect."[14]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Thus have We sent it down, an Arabic Recitation, and We have explained in it such Warnings that they may have piety, or that it may serve as a Reminder for them."[15]

Moreover, Allah – Mighty and Majestic – promised whoever listened to His Speech and excelled in etiquette when listening to it, with beautiful reflection and with adhering to the obligation of following it and acting upon it, that Allah has given glad tidings to him of every goodness from Him, and has promised him the most excellent reward for that. Thus He, Mighty and Majestic, said, "So give glad tidings to the slaves! Those who listen to the Word and follow its best meaning – it is they whom Allah has guided, and it is they who are People of Understanding!"[16]

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[12] Al 'Imran (The Family of 'Imran), 3:103

[13] al-Zumar (The Companies), 39:23

[14] Sad, 38:29

[15] Ta Ha, 20:113

[16] al-Zumar (The Companies), 39:17-18

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "And turn to your Lord, and submit to Him, before the Punishment comes to you, when you will not be helped. And follow the most excellent of that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, before the Punishment comes to you suddenly while you do not realise."[17]

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All of the Speech of our Lord is excellent for whoever recites it and whoever listens to it. This is only, and Allah knows better, the description of a people who, when they hear the Qur'an, search in the Qur'an for the most excellent way in which they may draw near to Allah, Mighty and Majestic, from all that their Generous Master has signified to them. By this, they seek His Pleasure and hope for His Mercy. They heard Allah saying, "When the Qur'an is recited, listen to it and be silent, that you may be shown Mercy."[18] Thus, their excellent listening causes them to reflect upon what is for them and against them. They heard Allah say, "So remind, with the Qur'an, those who fear My Warning!"[19]

Further, Allah – Mighty and Majestic – has informed us about the Jinn regarding their excellent listening to the Qur'an and their responding to that which it encouraged them to do; then they returned to their people and admonished them with what they had heard of the Qur'an, with the most excellent admonishment possible. Allah, Mighty and Majestic, said, "Say: It has been inspired to me that a group of the Jinn listened, then they said, 'We have heard an Amazing Recitation! It guides to rightful conduct, so we have believed in it, and we shall never associate with our Lord anyone as a partner'."[20]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "And when we directed to you a group of the Jinn, listening to the Qur'an: so when they attended it, they said, 'Be silent!'; when it was completed, they turned to their people, warning them. They said, 'O our people! Truly, we have heard a book sent down after Musa, confirming that which came before it; it guides to the Truth and to a Straight

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17 al-Zumar (The Companies), 39:54-55

18 al-A'raf (The Heights) 7:204

19 Qaf, 40:45

20 al-Jinn (The Genies), 72:1-2

Way. O our people! Respond to the caller of Allah and have faith in him, He will forgive you your sins and give you refuge from a Painful Punishment'."[21]

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Allah, Mighty and Majestic, has already said in the Surah "Qaf. By the Magnificent Qur'an!" that which signifies to us the great matters that He has created of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, and the amazing matters of His Wisdom in His Creation. He then mentioned Death, and the greatness of its matter; He mentioned the Fire, and the greatness of its matter; He mentioned the Garden, and what He has prepared therein for His Friends. Thus Allah said, "For them, there will be whatever they wish therein, and with Us there is More."[22] Then, He said after all of that, "Truly, in that is a Reminder for whoever has a heart, or lends the hearing attentively."[23] Thus He, of Majestic Remembrance, informed that the listener with his ears should be witnessing with his heart what he recites or listens to, so that he may benefit from his recitation of the Qur'an and from his listening to one reciting it.

Moreover, Allah, Mighty and Majestic, has truly urged His creation to ponder the Qur'an deeply; thus He, Mighty and Majestic, says, "Do they not then ponder the Qur'an deeply? Or do hearts have locks over them?"[24]

He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Do they not then ponder the Qur'an deeply? Were it from other than Allah, they would surely have found in it much contradiction!"[25]

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Do you not see – may Allah have mercy upon you! – your Generous Master, how He encourages His creation to ponder His Speech deeply? Whoever ponders His Speech deeply, recognises the Lord, Mighty and Majestic; recognises the Magnificence of His Authority and Power; recognises the Magnificence of His Grace upon the Believers; and recognises what is due upon him of the obligation of worshipping Him. Thus,

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21 al-Ahqaf (The Winding Sand-Tracts) 46:29-31

22 Qaf, 50:35

23 Qaf, 50: 37

24 Muhammad, 47:24

25 al-Nisa' (Women), 4:82

he imposes upon himself to adhere to the duty, is wary of that which his Generous Master has warned him against, and desires that which He has encouraged.

So whoever has these qualities when reciting the Qur'an and listening to it from others, the Qur'an is for him a Cure: thus he becomes rich without wealth, becomes honoured without relatives, and finds solace where others have anxiety. His concern when he begins reciting a surah is, "When will I be admonished by what I recite?" His objective is not, "When will I complete the surah?" Rather, his objective is, "When will I understand from Allah, Mighty and Majestic, His address? When will I restrain myself? When will I learn a lesson?" This is because the recitation of the Qur'an is an act of worship, and thus cannot be done with heedlessness, and Allah is the One who grants Capability for that.

1 – Muhammad b. al-Husayn informed us; he said: Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Wasiti narrated to us, he said: Zayd b. Ahzam narrated to us, he said: Muhammad b. al-Fadl narrated to us, he said: Sa'id b. Zayd narrated to us, from Abu Hamzah, from Ibrahim, from 'Alqamah, from 'Abdullah i.e. Ibn Mas'ud, who said, "Do not scatter it like inferior dates[26] and do not chant it quickly as with poetry. Stop at its wonders, move the hearts with it, and let not your concern be the end of the surah."

2 – Muhammad b. al-Husayn informed us; he said: Abu Bakr also narrated to; he said: al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Sabbah al-Za'farani narrated to us; he said, 'Abd al-Wahhab b. 'Ata' narrated to us, he said: I heard Abu 'Ubaydah al-Naji say that he heard al-Hasan [al-Basri] saying, "Adhere to the Book of Allah. Pursue whatever is therein of similitudes. Be people of Perception regarding it." He then said, "May Allah have mercy upon a slave who presents himself and his actions to the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic; if these conform to the Book of Allah, he praises Allah and asks Him for more; but if these oppose the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, he scolds himself and returns (to goodness) quickly."

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26 *Daql*: inferior and dry dates that do not have a specific name. Due to their low quality, they do not stick together and are easily scattered.

3 – Muhammad informed us; he said: Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi narrated to us, he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us: Ibn 'Ulayyah narrated to us: Ziyad b. Mikhraq narrated to us: from Mu'awiyah b. Qurrah, from Abu Kinanah, that Abu Musa al-Ash'ari gathered those who had recited [i.e. memorised] the Qur'an, and they were close to three hundred in number. He emphasised the magnificence of the Qur'an, and then said, "Truly, this Qur'an can be an asset for you, or it can be a burden upon you. So follow the Qur'an, and let it not follow you: for he who follows the Qur'an, it lands him in the Gardens of Paradise; and he whom the Qur'an follows, it smites him in the back of his head and hurls him into the Fire."

4 – Muhammad informed us; he said: Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad Ibn Sa'id narrated to us: al-Husayn b. al-Hasan al-Marwazi narrated to us: Ibn al-Mubarak informed us: Salim al-Makki informed us: from al-Hasan [al-Basri], who said, "Whoever wishes to know who he is, let him present himself to the Qur'an."

5 – Muhammad informed us; he said: Abu Muhammad also narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah informed us; he said: 'Abd al-Malik b. Abi Sulayman informed us, from 'Ata' and Qays b. Sa'd, from Mujahid, regarding the saying of Allah Exalted, "They recite it as it should truly be recited"[27]; he said, "They practise it as it should truly be practised."

6 – Muhammad informed us; he said: Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi narrated to us, he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: Abu Mu'awiyah al-Darir [the Blind] narrated to us, he said: 'Abd Rabbih Ibn Ayman narrated to us, from 'Ata', who said, "The Qur'an consists only of admonitions."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Before I mention the character of the People of the Qur'an and the manners that befit them, I shall mention the virtues of the Bearers of the Qur'an, so that they may be eager to recite it, act by it and to be humble before those from whom they learn it or those to whom they teach it.

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[27] al-Baqarah, 2:121

Chapter Two

Virtues of the Bearers of the Qur'an

7 – Abu l-'Abbas Hamid b. Muhammad b. Shu'ayb al-Balkhi narrated to us, he said: Ya'qub al-Dawraqi narrated to us, he said: 'Abd al-Rahman b. Mahdi narrated to us, from 'Abd al-Rahman b. Budayl, from his father, from Anas b. Malik, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "To Allah belong groups of people from amongst mankind." It was said, "Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "The People of the Qur'an are the People of Allah, and His Elite."

8 – Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Wasiti narrated to us, he said: Ziyad b. Ayyub narrated to us, he said: Abu 'Ubaydah al-Haddad narrated to us, he said: 'Abd al-Rahman b. Budayl narrated to us, from his father, from Anas b. Malik, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Truly, to Allah belong groups of people." It was said, "Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "The People of the Qur'an are the People of Allah, and His Elite."

9 – Abu Ja'far Ahmad b. Yahya al-Hulwani narrated to us, he said: Yahya b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Hammami narrated to us, he said: Hammad b. Shu'ayb narrated to us, from 'Asim, from Zirr, from 'Abdullah b. 'Amr, from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said, "It will be said to the companion of the Qur'an on the Day of Resurrection, 'Recite, and climb up the grades: recite rhythmically as you used to recite rhythmically in the world, for truly, your station will be at the last ayah you used to recite'."

10 – Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi narrated to us, he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: al-Fadl b. Dukayn narrated to us, he said: Sufyan narrated to us, from 'Asim, from Zirr, from 'Abdullah b. 'Amr, from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said, "It will be said, 'Recite and climb: recite rhythmically as you used to recite rhythmically in the world, for truly, your station will be at the last ayah you recite'."

11 – Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: it is also narrated from Umm al-Darda' that she said: I asked 'Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, about the one who enters the Garden from amongst those who recited the Qur'an, "What is his virtue over the one who did not recite it?" 'Aishah replied, may Allah be pleased with her, "Truly, the number of grades of the Garden is as the number of ayat of the Qur'an. So he who enters the Garden from amongst those who recited the Qur'an, there will be no-one above him."

12 – Abu l-Fadl Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Za'farani narrated to us, he said: 'Ali b. 'Asim narrated to us, from Ibrahim al-Hajari, from Abu l-Ahwas, from 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Learn this Qur'an, and recite it, for you are truly rewarded for its recitation, for every unit ten good deeds. Lo! I do not say Alif-Lam-Mim [is a unit], but Alif is a unit, Lam is a unit, and Mim is a unit. Truly, this Qur'an is the banquet of Allah, so learn from the banquet of Allah as much as you are able. Truly, this Qur'an is the Rope of Allah. It is the Clear Light, the Beneficial Cure, the Salvation of he who follows it, and the Protection of he who adheres to it: he does not go crooked that he should be corrected. Its wonders do not cease, and it does not decay from much repetition."

13 – Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi informed us; he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: Hajjaj b. Minhal narrated to us: Hammad b. Salamah narrated to us, from 'Ata' b. al-Sa'ib, from Abu l-Ahwas and Abu l-Bakhtari, that Ibn Mas'ud said, "Learn the Qur'an, and recite it, for you are truly rewarded for it, for every word ten good deeds. Lo! I do not say for Alif-Lam-Mim is ten, but for the Alif is ten, for the Lam is ten, and for the Mim is ten."

14 – Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Abi Dawud narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Tahir Ahmad b. 'Amr narrated to us, he said: Ibn Wahb narrated to us, he said: Yahya b. Ayyub informed us, from Khalid b. Yazid, from Tha'labah b. Abi l-Kunud, from Abu l-Kunud, from 'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. al-'As, who said, "He who collects the Qur'an has borne a great matter. Prophethood has been inserted between his shoulder-blades, except that he does not receive revelation. Thus, it does not befit the bearer of the Qur'an to show harshness with the one who shows harshness, or to show ignorance with the one who shows ignorance, for truly the Qur'an is in his interior."

15 – Abu Bakr b. Abi Dawud also narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Tahir narrated to us, he said: Ibn Wahb informed us; he said: Maslamah b. 'Ali informed me, from Zayd b. Waqid, from Makhul, from Abu Umamah al Bahili, who raised it [to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace] and said, "He who recites a quarter of the Qur'an has been given a quarter of Prophethood; he who recites a third of the Qur'an has been given a third of Prophethood; he who recites two thirds of the Qur'an has been given two thirds of Prophethood; he who recites [all of] the Qur'an has been given [all of] Prophethood, except that he does not receive revelation."

Chapter Three

Virtues of the One Who Learns the Qur'an and Teaches It

16 – Abu Shu'ayb 'Abdullah b. al-Hasan al-Harrani narrated to us, he said: 'Ali b. al-Ja'd narrated to us, he said: Shu'bah informed us, from 'Alqamah b. Marthad; he said: I heard Sa'd b. 'Ubaydah narrate from Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, from 'Uthman b. 'Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. Shu'bah said: I asked him, "From the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace?" He replied, "Yes." He said, "The best of you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it." Abu 'Abd al-Rahman said, "So this is what has made me sit in this seat of mine" – he taught from the caliphate of 'Uthman [23-35 H] until the amirate of al-Hajjaj [75-95 H].

17 – Abu Ja'far Ahmad b. Yahya al-Hulwani narrated to us, he said: Fayd b. Wathiq narrated to us, he said: 'Abd al-Wahid b. Ziyad narrated to us, from 'Abd al-Rahman b. Ishaq, from al-Nu'man b. Sa'd, from 'Ali b. Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him; he said: the Messenger of Allah, (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), said, "The best of you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it."

18 – Abu Khubayb al-'Abbas b. Ahmad al-Birti narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Mu'awiyah al-Jumhi narrated to us, he said: al-Harith b. Nabhan narrated to us, he said: 'Asim b. Bahdalah narrated to us, from Mus'ab b. Sa'd, from his father [Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas]; he said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "The best of you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it." He took my hand and made me sit in a gathering, teaching the Qur'an.

19 – Abu l-Fadl Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: Zuhayr b. Muhammad narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Yazid al-Muqri' [the Recitation-Teacher] informed us; he said:

Musa b. 'Ali b. Rabah narrated to us, he said: I heard my father say: I heard 'Uqbah b. 'Amir say: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came out to us whilst we were in the mosque and said, "Which of you would love to go in the morning to Buthan or al-'Aqiq[28] and bring two high-humped, dazzling she-camels every day, gaining them without sin or cutting family ties?" He said: We said, "Every one of us would love that, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "One of you going to the mosque in the morning and learning two ayat from the Book of Allah Exalted is better for him than two she-camels; three are better than three; four are better than four; any number is better than the same number of camels."

[28] Buthan and al-'Aqiq: two valleys outside Madinah where markets were held.

Chapter Four

Virtues of Gathering in the Mosque to Study the Qur'an

20 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. Rahwayh narrated to us, he said: Jarir, i.e. Ibn 'Abd al-Hamid narrated to us, from al-A'mash [the Blear-Eyed], from Abu Salih, from Abu Hurayrah, from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said, "No people sit together in one of the houses of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it together amongst themselves, except that the Angels surround them, Mercy envelops them, and Allah mentions them to those in His Presence. The one whose deeds slow him down, his lineage does not speed him up."

21 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah narrated to us, he said: Abu Mu'awiyah narrated to us, from from al-A'mash [the Blear-Eyed], from Abu Salih, from Abu Hurayrah, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "No people gather in one of the houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it together amongst themselves, except that Tranquillity descends upon them, Mercy envelops them, the Angels surround them, and Allah mentions them to those in His Presence."

22 – Al-Firyabi also narrated to us, he said: Minjab b. al-Harith narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Ahwas narrated to us, from Harun b. 'Antarah, from his father, who said: I said to Ibn 'Abbas, "Which deed is most virtuous?" He said, "The Remembrance of Allah is the Greatest. No people sit in one of the houses of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, studying the Book of Allah together and conveying it amongst themselves, except that the Angels shade them with their wings and they remain the Guests of Allah as long as they continue in this, until they delve into other conversation."

Chapter Five

Mention of the Character of the People of the Qur'an

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: It befits the one whom Allah has taught the Qur'an and honoured him over others whom He did not make bearers of His Book; who wishes to be from the People of the Qur'an, the People of Allah and His elite; and to be amongst those whom Allah has promised Magnificent Bounty as we have mentioned previously; and to be amongst those about whom Allah, Mighty and Majestic, said, "They recite it as it should truly be recited"[29]; it is said in explanation [of this ayat], "They practise it as it should truly be practised";

23 – And [wishes to be] amongst those about whom the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "The one who recites the Qur'an and is expert in it, will be with the Pure, Noble Recording Angels. The one who recites it, finding it difficult, will have two rewards";

24 – Bishr b. al-Harith said: I heard 'Isa b. Yunus say, "When the slave completes reciting the Qur'an, the Angel kisses him between his eyes";

... thus, it befits him to make the Qur'an a spring for his heart, by which he rebuilds that which has become derelict in his heart. He must display the etiquettes of the Qur'an, and personify Noble Character by which he is distinguished from the rest of the people, who do not recite the Qur'an.

The first matter that it befits him to employ is taqwa of Allah secretly and openly, by exercising caution (*wara'*) with regards to the sources of his food, drink, dress and earnings. He is perceptive about his time and the corruptions of its people, that he may beware of them regarding his religion.

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[29] al-Baqarah, 2:121

He concentrates on his own situation, having the aspiration to reform whatever is corrupt in his affairs, guarding his tongue and choosing his words. If he speaks, he speaks with knowledge when he sees speech to be correct. If he remains silent, he remains silent with knowledge when he sees silence to be correct. He rarely delves into that which does not concern him. He fears from his tongue things more severe than he fears from his enemy. He imprisons his tongue the way he imprisons his enemy, so that he may be safe from its evil and bad consequences. He rarely laughs at the matters at which people laugh, due to the bad consequences of laughter. If he is pleased by something in accordance with the Truth, he smiles. He dislikes joking, fearing frivolity: if he jokes, he speaks truth. He is accommodating in countenance, pure in speech. He does not allow himself to be praised for qualities he has, how then for qualities he does not have? He is wary of his self, that it should overcome him for what it desires, of the things that will anger his Master. He does not backbite anyone. He does not look down upon anyone. He does not abuse anyone. He is not happy at the affliction of others. He neither transgresses upon anyone, nor envies him. He does not think the worst about anyone, except for one who deserves it. He loves with knowledge, and hates with knowledge. He speaks about a person's faults only with knowledge, and remains silent about a person's real nature with knowledge.

He has made the Qur'an, Sunnah and Fiqh his guide to every good and beautiful quality, guarding all his limbs from what has been forbidden. If he walks, he walks with knowledge. If he sits, he sits with knowledge. He strives hard so that people may be safe from his tongue and hand. He does not behave ignorantly: if someone behaves ignorantly towards him, he is forbearing. He does not oppress: if he is oppressed, he forgives. He does not transgress: if he is transgressed upon, he has patience. He restrains his fury to please his Lord and enrage his enemy. He is humble in himself: when the truth is presented to him, he accepts it, whether from one younger or older. He seeks status from Allah, not from the creatures. He despises arrogance, fearing for his self from it.

He does not (earn to) eat by the Qur'an, nor does he like his needs being fulfilled by way of it. He neither runs with it to the sons of kings, nor sits with it amongst the rich so that they may honour him. If the people earn

plenty from the world without understanding or perception, he earns a little with understanding and knowledge. If the people wear fine luxury, he wears of the halal that which conceals his private parts. If his circumstances ease, he eases; if they tighten, he tightens. He is content with little, so it suffices him. He bewares for his self from the world that which will make it tyrannical.

He follows the obligations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah: he eats food with knowledge; he drinks with knowledge; he dresses with knowledge; he sleeps with knowledge; he has union with his wife with knowledge; he accompanies his brothers with knowledge, visiting them with knowledge, seeking permission to enter upon them with knowledge, and greeting them with knowledge; he treats his neighbour with knowledge.

He imposes strictly upon himself the honouring of his parents: he lowers his wing to them, and lowers his voice before their voices. He expends his wealth for them, and looks upon them with the eye of respect and mercy. He prays for their longevity, and is thankful for them in old age. He is not irritated by them, and does not look down upon them. If they ask for his help in a matter of obedience, he helps them. If they ask for his help in a matter of disobedience, he does not help them, but is gentle with them in his disobedience of them: he shows beautiful etiquette such that they may return from the ugly matter that they intended, that it does not befit them to do.

He maintains family relations and despises breaking them. If someone breaks off relations with him, he does not break off relations with them. If someone disobeys Allah regarding him, he obeys Allah regarding him. He accompanies the believers with knowledge, and sits with them with knowledge. He benefits those who accompany him, being an excellent companion for those whom he sits with. If he teaches another, he is gentle with him. He is not harsh with the one who makes a mistake, and does not embarrass him. He is gentle in all his matters, extremely patient in teaching goodness. The learner finds comfort in him, and the one sitting with him is joyous at his company. Sitting with him brings goodness. He educates his companions with the etiquettes of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

If he is afflicted with a difficulty, the Qur'an and the Sunnah are two educators for him. He grieves with knowledge. He cries with knowledge. He has patience with knowledge. He purifies himself with knowledge. He prays with knowledge. He gives zakat with knowledge. He gives charity with knowledge. He fasts with knowledge. He performs the Pilgrimage with knowledge. He wages war with knowledge. He earns with knowledge, and spends with knowledge. He eases in matters with knowledge, and tightens in them with knowledge. The Qur'an and the Sunnah have taught him his manners.

He looks through the pages of the Qur'an in order to teach himself manners, and is not pleased for himself to fulfil with ignorance the obligations imposed by Allah. He has made knowledge and understanding his guide to every goodness. When he studies the Qur'an, it is with the presence of understanding and intelligence: his aspiration is to understand that which Allah has imposed upon him of following His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. His aspiration is not: when will I complete the surah? His aspiration is: when will I be enriched by Allah, so that I am in no need of other-than-him? When will I be of the pious? When will I be of those who excel? When will I be of those who have total trust? When will I be of those who humble themselves? When will I be of the patient ones? When will I be of the truthful ones? When will I be of the fearful ones? When will I be of the hopeful ones? When will I have non-attachment to the world? When will I have yearning for the Hereafter? When will I repent from sins? When will I recognise the widespread favours? When will I be grateful for them? When will I understand from Allah His address? When will I understand what I recite? When will I overcome my self regarding its base desires? When will I strive in Allah with a true jihad? When will I guard my tongue? When will I lower my gaze? When will I guard my chastity? When will I be ashamed before Allah with true shame? When will I be preoccupied with my faults? When will I reform the corruptions in my life? When will I call my self to account? When will I take provision for the day of my resurrection? When will I be pleased with Allah? When will I have trust in Allah? When will I be admonished by the warnings of the Qur'an? When will I be preoccupied with His remembrance away from remembrance of other-than-Him? When will I love what He loves? When will I hate what He hates? When will I be sincere to Allah? When will I purify my deeds for Him? When will I reduce my vain hopes? When will I prepare myself for the day of

my death, when my remaining term shall have vanished? When will I build the life of my grave? When will I reflect upon the Standing and its severity? When will I reflect upon my solitude with my Lord? When will I reflect upon the Return? When will I beware that which my Lord has warned me of: a Fire whose heat is severe, its depth great and its grief lengthy. Its inhabitants do not die that they may rest; their sins are not forgiven; their tears are not shown mercy. Their food is Zaqqum, and their drink is boiling water. Every time their skins are roasted, they are replaced with new ones so that they may taste the Punishment. They regret when regret does not benefit them, and they bite upon their hands in sorrow at their falling short in obeying Allah and their embarking upon the disobedience of Allah. Thus, one of them says, "Alas! If only I had sent something forward for my life!"[30] Another says, "My Lord, Return me! It may be that I work righteousness in what I have neglected."[31] Another says, "O Woe to us! What is the matter with this Book? It does not leave a minor or major matter, except that it counts it."[32] Another says, "O Woe to me! If only I had not taken so-and-so as a close friend!"[33] Another group of them says, with their faces turning in different kinds of punishment, "Alas! If only we had obeyed Allah, and obeyed the Messenger!"[34]

So this is the Fire, O assembly of Muslims! O Bearers of the Qur'an! Allah has warned the believers of it in more than one place in His Book, out of mercy from Him towards the believers. Allah, Mighty and Majestic, said, "O you who have believed! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones. Upon it are angels, stern and severe: they disobey not Allah in what He commands them, and they do as they are ordered."[35] He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "Fear the fire that has been prepared for the unbelievers."[36] He, Mighty and Majestic, also said, "O you who have believed!

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30 al-Fajr (The Dawn), 89:24

31 al-Mu'minun (The Believers), 23:99-100

32 al-Kahf (The Cave), 18:49

33 al-Furqan (The Criterion), 25:28

34 al-Ahzab (The Confederates), 33:66

35 al-Tahrim (The Prohibition), 66:6

36 Al 'Imran (The Family of 'Imran), 3:131

Fear Allah, and let each soul see what it has sent forth for tomorrow; and Fear Allah: truly, Allah is Aware of what you do."[37] He then warned the believers against being heedless of what Allah has obligated upon them and what He has entrusted to them not to lose, and to guard His limits that He has entrusted to them, and not to be like the others who rebelled against His command and so He punished them with different types of punishment. Thus He, Mighty and Majestic, said, "And do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He caused them to forget themselves: they are the truly rebellious ones."[38] He then informed the believers that the people of the Fire and the people of the Garden are not equal, saying, "Not equal are the people of the Fire and the people of the Garden: the people of the Garden, they are the truly successful ones."[39]

Thus, when the intelligent believer recites the Qur'an, he presents himself to it, so it becomes like a mirror in which he sees which of his actions are beautiful and which are ugly. Thus, whatever his Master warns him against, he is wary of it; whatever He instils fear regarding its consequences, he fears; whatever his Master encourages him in, he desires it and hopes for it.

Thus, whoever fits this description, or close to this description, he has recited it as it should truly be recited, and has attended to it as it should truly be taken care of. The Qur'an becomes for him a witness, intercessor, comfort and support. Whoever has these qualities benefits himself and benefits his family, and returns with every goodness upon his parents and his children in this world and the hereafter.

25 – Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Sulayman al-Sijistani narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Tahir Ahmad b. 'Amr narrated to us, he said: Ibn Wahb informed us, he said: Yahya b. Ayyub informed me, from Zabban b. Fayid, from Sahl b. Mu'adh al-Juhani, from his father, that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "He who recites the Qur'an and acts by its contents, his parents will be made to wear a crown on the Day of Resurrection: its sparkle would be greater than the light of the sun in the houses of this world, were it to exist here; so what do you think about the one who performed the action?"

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[37] al-Hashr (The Gathering), 59:18

[38] al-Hashr (The Gathering), 59:19

[39] al-Hashr (The Gathering), 59:20

26 – Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi narrated to us, he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: Ya'la b. 'Ubayd narrated to us, from al-A'mash [the Blear-Eyed], from Khaythamah, who said: A woman passed by 'Isa b. Maryam [Jesus, son of Mary] and said, "Success for the lap that carried you, and for the breast from which you suckled!" 'Isa replied, "Success for the one who recites the Qur'an and moreover acts by it!"

27 – 'Umar b. Ayyub al-Saqati narrated to us, he said: 'Ubaydullah b. 'Umar al-Qawariri [the Crystal-Seller] narrated to us, he said: Abu Ahmad al-Zubayri narrated to us, he said: Bashir b. Muhajir narrated to us, from 'Abdullah b. Buraydah, from his father [Buraydah b. al-Husayb], from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said, "The Qur'an will come to a person on the Day of Resurrection like a pale, emaciated man, so he will say to him, 'Who are you?' He will reply, 'I am the one who made your day thirsty and your night sleepless'."

28 – Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Sulayman narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Tahir Ahmad b. 'Amr narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Wahb narrated to us, he said: Musa b. Ayyub informed me, from his paternal uncle Iyas b. 'Amir, that 'Ali b. Abi Talib said to him, "Truly, if you remain, the Qur'an will be recited by three groups of people: one group for Allah Exalted; one group for the world; one group for argumentation. He who seeks by it will attain."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: I have mentioned the characters of the group who recite the Qur'an intending Allah, Mighty and Majestic, by their recitation. I shall now mention the two groups who intend by their recitation the world and argumentation, and I shall describe their characters so that the one who fears Allah will recognise these and beware of them.

Chapter Six

The Character of those who Recite the Qur'an without Intending Allah, Mighty and Majestic, Thereby

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: As for the one who recites the Qur'an for this world and for the sons of this world, part of his character is that he is a preserver of the letters of the Qur'an but neglectful of its limits, feeling important in himself and arrogant towards others. He has taken the Qur'an as merchandise by which he earns his living from the wealthy and by which he seeks to fulfil his needs. He respects the sons of the world and looks down upon the poor. If he teaches one wealthy he is gentle with him, out of greed for his worldly possessions. If he teaches one poor he treats him harshly, since such a one has no worldly possessions to attract his greed. He uses the Qur'an to make the poor his servants, and he wanders proudly around the wealthy with it. If he has a beautiful voice he loves to recite to the kings and lead them in prayer, out of greed for their worldly possessions. However, if the poor ask him to lead them in prayer he finds this burdensome due to their lack of worldly possessions. His goal is only the world, at whose feet he has settled. He prides himself over other people because of the Qur'an, and regards his extra knowledge of the Qur'an as a proof against those who are inferior to him in preserving it. Similar is the case with his familiarity with one of the many recitations; if he had sense, he would know that he should not recite with the other recitation.

Thus, you see him wandering around in arrogance, speaking much and indiscriminately. He criticises those who have not preserved as he has, and if he knows of someone who has preserved as well as him, he looks for his faults. He is arrogant in his manner of sitting, and pompous when teaching others. There is no place for humility in his heart. He is given to much laughter and delving into matters that do not concern him. He is distracted from those learning from him by conversation with his companions, and more attentive towards their talk than to listening to those whom he has a duty to hear. He pretends that he memorises whatever he hears, so he is more desirous of the talk of the people than of the speech of the Lord, Mighty and Majestic. He is not

humble upon listening to the Qur'an, and he does not weep or grieve. He does not bother to think about what is being recited to him, even though he has been encouraged to do so.

He is desirous of the world and whatever draws one nearer to it, and becomes angry or pleased only for the world. If a person falls short in what is due to him he says, "One does not fall short regarding the rights of the people of the Qur'an. The needs of the people of the Qur'an should be fulfilled." He seeks to fulfil his rights from the people, but does not seek to fulfil from himself the rights which Allah has over it. He is angry with others – he thinks – for the sake of Allah, but is not angry with himself for the sake of Allah. He does not care about his earnings, whether they are from the lawful or the prohibited. The world has become very important in his heart: if unlawful earnings escape him, he grieves at his loss. He does not manifest the Qur'anic morality in his character, and does not reproach himself upon mention of the Divine promises and warnings. He is frivolous and heedless about what he recites or whatever is recited to him. His only concern is to memorise the letters: if he errs regarding a single letter, he is saddened that his reputation amongst the people, and therefore his position, may diminish.

Thus, you see him grieving and sorrowful about it, whilst he is utterly careless about what he has violated between himself and Allah, the commandments and prohibitions of the Qur'an. His morality in many matters is the morality of the ignorant who have no knowledge. He does not discipline himself to acquire the knowledge that the Qur'an enjoins upon him. When he heard Allah Exalted saying, "Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it! Whatever he forbids you from, refrain!"[40] it was a duty upon him to seek knowledge in order to recognise what the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, has forbidden so that he can refrain from it.

He cares little about the knowledge that is incumbent upon him regarding that which is between him and Allah, Mighty and Majestic, but is extremely concerned about the knowledge by which he beautifies himself for the people of the world so that they may honour him for that. He knows little about the lawful and prohibited matters regarding which Allah and then His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) have encouraged

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[40] al-Hashr (The Gathering), 59:7

him to learn, so that he may enjoy the lawful with knowledge and leave the prohibited with knowledge. He is neither desirous of having the knowledge of the Favours of Allah, nor of having the knowledge of showing gratitude to the Bestower of Favour.

His recitation of the Qur'an indicates pride within himself and contrived beautification for the listeners. He has no humility to manifest upon his limbs. When he studies the Qur'an or someone studies it with him, his concern is, "When will I finish?" not, "When will I understand?" Upon recitation, he thinks about the similitudes of the Qur'an and does not stop at the Promises and Warnings. He takes himself to account over the pleasure of the creatures but does not care about the wrath of the Lord of the Worlds. He loves to be known for much study, and publicises his completion of the recitation of the Qur'an in order to earn the respect of the people. He has been deceived by the beautiful praise of those who do not know him, and is happy with false praise. His actions are those of the people of ignorance: he follows his desires in the matters that his self likes, and does not care about those matters that the Qur'an prohibits.

If he teaches others, he becomes angry at those who learn from other teachers. If one of the people of the Qur'an is described with righteousness in his presence, he dislikes it; if he is mentioned with a disapproved matter, he is pleased. He ridicules those inferior to him and holds in contempt those superior to him. He pursues the faults of the people of the Qur'an in order to reduce their status and raise himself. He wishes that others err and he proceeds correctly. Whoever has these qualities has exposed himself to the wrath of his Generous Master.

Worse than that is when he shows upon himself externally the signs of one righteous by his recitation of the Qur'an, although he has internally wasted what was due to Allah and has embarked upon what his Master has forbidden him. All of that is due to love of leadership and inclination towards the world, for he has become afflicted by self-amazement at his preservation of the Qur'an as well as that of others pointing him out with their fingers. If one of the sons of the world or one of the kings falls ill and asks him to recite the Qur'an completely over him, he hurries to do so and is pleased at it. However, if an unknown, poor person falls ill and asks him to complete a recitation over him, he finds it burdensome.

He memorises the Qur'an and recites it with his tongue, but he has wasted many of its rulings. His manners are those of the ignorant. When he eats, it is without knowledge. When he drinks, it is without knowledge. When he sleeps, it is without knowledge. When he wears a garment, it is without knowledge. When he has union with his wife, it is without knowledge. When he accompanies, visits or greets people or seeks permission to enter upon them, all of that occurs without knowledge from the Book or the Sunnah. Better than him is one who only preserves a part of the Qur'an but demands from himself the duty that Allah has made incumbent upon him, of the knowledge of fulfilling the obligatory duties and avoiding the prohibitions, even though no one cares about him and fingers do not point him out.

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Whoever has these qualities becomes an affliction for every afflicted one, for when he displays a quality that does not befit someone like him, the ignorant follow his example. When the ignorant one is then criticised, he says, "Such-and-such, a bearer of the Book of Allah, did this, so we have more right to do it." Therefore, whoever is in such a position has exposed himself to a mighty matter, the proof has been established against him and he has no excuse unless he repents.

The only thing that moved me to explain such ugly character is sincere advice to the people of the Qur'an, so that they may hold to noble morals and stay away from low character. Allah is the only One who grants us and them capability towards righteousness.

Know – may Allah have mercy on us and you – that I have transmitted reports concerning that which I have mentioned, indicating what I dislike for the people of the Qur'an. I shall now mention that which comes to mind, so that the reader of our book may advise himself sincerely upon reciting the Qur'an, imposing what is correct upon himself. Allah is the One who grants capability.

29 – Abu Bakr Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Ibrahim b. al-'Ala' al-Zubaydi narrated to us, he said: Baqiyyah b. al-Walid narrated to us, from Shu'bah, from Sa'id al-Jurayri, from Abu Nadrah, from Abu Firas, from 'Umar b. al-Khattab, who said, "There passed by us a time when we did not think that anyone learnt the Qur'an except intending Allah, Mighty and

Majestic, thereby. Now lately, I fear that men learn it for the sake of people and what they have. Therefore, intend Allah with your recitation and your deeds, for we used to recognise you because the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was amongst us, revelation used to descend and Allah used to inform us of your news. As for today, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has passed and revelation has been discontinued, so I only recognise you by the following: whoever does good outwardly, we love him for it and think good of him; whoever does evil outwardly, we hate him for it and think evil of him; your secrets are between you and Allah, Mighty and Majestic."

30 – Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Yahya b. Sulayman al-Marwazi narrated to us, he said: 'Ubaydullah b. Muhammad al-'Ayshi narrated to us, he said: Hammad b. Salamah narrated to us, he said: al-Jurayri informed us, from Abu Nadrah, from 'Umar b. al-Khattab, who said, "O people!" and mentioned a report similar to that of al-Firyabi.

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: So if 'Umar b. al-Khattab was afraid for people who recited the Qur'an at that time that they may incline towards the world, then what do you think of them today, especially as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has informed us that "there will be peoples who recite the Qur'an, establishing it the way an arrow is stood upright; they will seek the hasty matters with it and not the deferred matters," i.e. they will seek by it the hasty matters of the world and will not seek the Hereafter.

31 – Abu Muhammad al-Hasan b. 'Alawayh al-Qattan [the Cotton-Trader] narrated to us, he said: Khalaf b. Hisham al-Bazzar narrated to us, he said: Khalid b. 'Abdullah al-Wasiti narrated to us, from Humayd al-A'raj [the Lame], from Muhammad b. al-Munkadir, from Jabir b. 'Abdullah, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came out to us whilst we were reciting the Qur'an. Amongst us was the Arab and the non-Arab. He listened and then said, "Recite, for all of it is good! There will come a people who will establish it the way an arrow is stood upright; they will seek the hasty matters with it and not the deferred matters."

32 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn b. al-Husayn al-Marwazi narrated to us, he said: Ibn al-Mubarak informed us, he said: Musa b. 'Ubaydah al-Rabadhi informed us, from his brother 'Abdullah b. 'Ubaydah, from Sahl b. Sa'd al-Sa'idi, who said: We were reciting when the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came out to us and said, "All Praise be to Allah. The Book of Allah is one. Amongst you are the best of you, and amongst you are the fair-skinned and the dark-skinned. Recite the Qur'an! Recite, before peoples come who will recite it, establishing its letters the way the arrow is stood upright. It will not go beyond their throats. They will seek its reward hastily, and will not seek its deferred reward."

33 – Abu Muhammad also narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn b. al-Husayn narrated to us, he said: Ibn al-Mubarak narrated to us, he said: Musa b. 'Ubaydah narrated to us, from Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. al-Harith, from Ibn al-Had, from al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "This Qur'an will become dominant, to the extent that the oceans are traversed and crossed with steeds unleashed in the way of Allah. There will then come a people who will recite the Qur'an, and when they have recited it they will say, 'We have recited the Qur'an. So who is more learned than us, who is more knowledgeable than us'?" He then turned to his companions and asked, "Do you see any good in those people?" They replied, "No." He said, "But they are from you, and they are from this nation, and they are the real fuel of the Fire!"

34 – Abu Bakr 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Wasiti narrated to us, he said: Zuhayr b. Muhammad narrated to us; 'Abdullah b. Muhammad also informed us, he said: Ibn Numayr narrated to us, from Musa b. 'Ubaydah, from Muhammad b. Ibrahim, from Ibn al-Had, from al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, and mentioned the hadith similarly.

35 – Ibn 'Abd al-Hamid also narrated to us, he said: Zuhayr b. Muhammad narrated to us, he said: Abu Nu'aym informed us: Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. al-Muhajir narrated to us, he said: I heard my father mention from Mujahid, from Ibn 'Umar, who said, "Truly, we were the beginning of this nation. There would be men, amongst the best of the companions of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who only had with them one surah

or so from the Qur'an, but the Qur'an was heavy upon them and they were given the sustenance of acting according to it. Truly, the end of this nation will have the Qur'an light upon them until even the child and the non-Arab recites it, but they will not act according to it."

36 – Ibn 'Abd al-Hamid narrated to us, he said: Zuhayr b. Muhammad narrated to us, he said: Sa'id b. Sulayman informed us, he said: Khalid – i.e. al-Wasiti – informed us, from 'Ata' b. al-Sa'ib who said: Abu 'Abd al-Rahman used to instruct us in recitation. One day, he said: 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "A people will surely inherit this Qur'an who will drink it the way water is drunk. It will not go beyond their throats."

37 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn b. al-Husayn al-Marwazi narrated to us, he said: Ibn al-Mubarak informed us, he said: Ma'mar informed us, from Yahya b. al-Mukhtar, from al-Hasan [al-Basri] who said, "Truly, this Qur'an is recited by slaves and children who have no knowledge of its interpretation, for they have not followed the matter from its beginning. Allah, Mighty and Majestic, said, 'A Book, We have sent it down to you, Blessed, that they may ponder its signs deeply.'[41] Pondering its signs deeply is no more than following it, and Allah knows best. But by Allah, it is not preserving its letters and wasting its limits! One of them even says, 'I have recited the whole Qur'an without missing a single letter of it,' although by Allah, he has missed it all, for the Qur'an is not seen in him in any of his character or deeds. Another even says, 'Truly, I can recite a surah in one breath'! By Allah, these are not reciters, or people of knowledge or wisdom or spiritual caution! When did real reciters ever say things like this? May Allah not make their like widespread amongst the people!"

38 – Abu Muhammad also narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. al-Mubarak informed us, he said: 'Abd al-Malik b. Abi Sulayman informed us, from 'Ata' and Qays b. Sa'd, from Mujahid, about His saying, Mighty and Majestic, "They recite it as it should truly be recited,"[42] he said, "They practise it as it should truly be practised."

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41 Sad, 38:29

42 al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:121

39 – Abu l-Fadl al-'Abbas b. Yusuf al-Shakali narrated to us, he said: al-'Ala' b. Salim narrated to us, he said: Shu'ayb b. Harb narrated to us, he said: Malik b. Mighwal narrated to us, from al-Musayyib b. Rafi', who said: 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud said, "It befits a bearer of the Qur'an to be known by his night when the people are asleep; by his day when the people are feasting; by his caution when the people mix [the lawful and the unlawful]; by his humility when the people are proud; by his grief when the people are happy; by his weeping when the people are laughing; and by his silence when the people chatter."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All of these reports indicate what we mentioned earlier, that it befits the people of the Qur'an to be distinct in their character from the character of other people who have not learnt the knowledge that they have. When difficult matters befall them, they turn to Allah for refuge from them and do not turn to the creatures for shelter. Allah Most Perfect is foremost in their hearts, for they have acquired their manners from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. They are symbols whose actions are followed, for they are the special elite of Allah and His people: they are the Party of Allah – Lo! The Party of Allah are truly the real achievers of Success!

40 – Abu l-Fadl Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: al-Fadl b. Ziyad narrated to us, he said: 'Abd al-Samad b. Yazid narrated to us, he said: I heard al-Fudayl b. 'Iyad saying, "It befits a bearer of the Qur'an to not be in need of any of the creatures, whether the Caliph or anyone beneath him. Rather, it is fitting that the creatures should be in need of him."

41 – He also said: I heard al-Fudayl saying, "The bearer of the Qur'an is the bearer of the banner of Islam. It does not befit him to indulge in idle talk or activity with those who do so, or to be heedless with those who are so, or to indulge in frivolity with those who do so."

42 – He also said: I heard al-Fudayl saying, "The Qur'an was only revealed to be acted upon, but the people treated its recitation as action." This means that its lawful should be treated as lawful and its prohibitions as prohibited, and that they should stop at its allegorical meanings.

43 – Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] also narrated to us, he said: I heard Abu l-Hasan Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Abu l-Ward saying: Hudhayfah al-Mar'ashi wrote to Yusuf b. Asbat, "It has reached me that you sold your religion for two coins. You stopped at a milk-seller and asked him, 'How much is this?' He replied, 'For you, one sixth.' You said, 'No, one eighth.' He said, 'It is yours,' for he knew you. Remove from your head the contentment of the heedless, awake from the slumber of the dead, and know that whoever recites the Qur'an and then gives preference to the world is not safe from being among those who mock the Signs of Allah!"

44 – Abu Muhammad 'Abdullah b. Salih al-Bukhari narrated to us, he said: Makhlad b. al-Hasan Ibn Abi Zumayl narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Malih narrated to us, he said: Maymun b. Mihran used to say, "Were the people of the Qur'an to be righteous, all people would be righteous."

45 – Abu Muhammad 'Abdullah b. Salih al-Bukhari informed us, he said: 'Abdah b. 'Abd al-Rahim al-Marwazi narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Yazid al-Muqri' [the Recitation-Teacher] informed us, he said: Hayat i.e. Ibn Shurayh informed us, he said: Bashir b. Abi 'Amr al-Khawlani narrated to me that al-Walid b. Qays narrated to him that he heard Abu Sa'id al-Khudri saying: I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, "There will be later generations after some years who will waste the Prayer and follow their lusts, so they will meet destruction. There will then be later generations who will recite the Qur'an but it will not pass beyond their throats. Three types of people will recite the Qur'an: the believer, the hypocrite and the sinner." Bashir said: I said to al-Walid, "Who are these three?" He replied, "The hypocrite disbelieves in it, the sinner eats by earning from it, and the believer is a believer. [In one version: ... the believer acts by it.]"

46 – Abu Bakr b. Abi Dawud narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. Ibrahim b. Yazid narrated to us, he said: Sa'd b. al-Salt narrated to us, he said: al-A'mash narrated to us, from Khaythamah, from al-Hasan [al-Basri], who said: 'Imran b. Husayn and I passed by a man reciting Surah Yusuf, so 'Imran stopped and listened to his recitation. When the man had finished, he began to beg, so 'Imran said the prayer of return [i.e. "Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to

Him we are returning"] and said, "Go away, for I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, 'Whoever recites the Qur'an should ask Allah by it, for there will come a people who recite the Qur'an and beg from the people by it'."

47 – Abu Bakr b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Wasiti narrated to us, he said: Ya'qub b. Ibrahim al-Dawraqi narrated to us, he said: Yazid b. Harun narrated to us, he said: Shurayk b. 'Abdullah informed us, from Mansur, from Khaythamah, from al-Hasan [al-Basri], who said: I was walking with 'Imran b. Husayn, each of us holding the other's hand, when we passed by a beggar reciting the Qur'an. 'Imran sat with his garment wrapped around him, listening to the Qur'an. When the man had finished he began to beg, so 'Imran said, "Go away from us, for I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, 'Recite the Qur'an and ask Allah by it, for after you will truly be a people who recite the Qur'an and beg from the people by it'."

48 – Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Sawaniti narrated to us, he said: Miqdam b. Dawud the Egyptian narrated to us, he said: Asad b. Musa narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Wahb narrated to us, from al-Madi b. Muhammad, from Aban, from Anas b. Malik, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "The bearers of the Qur'an will be brought on the Day of Resurrection, and Allah Exalted will say, 'You are the preservers of My Speech: I will take you to account as I take the Prophets to account, except for the matter of Revelation'."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: In this there is a message for whoever ponders it deeply and therefore fears Allah, honours the Qur'an and protects it, and sells what perishes for what lasts. Allah is the Bestower of Capability for that.

Chapter Seven

Etiquettes of the Recitation-Teacher When He Sits To Teach Recitation and Instruct for the Sake of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, and the Manners Befitting Him

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: It befits the one whom Allah has taught His Book, so he wishes to sit in the mosque teaching recitation of the Qur'an for the sake of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, taking advantage of the saying of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), "The best of you is the one who learns the Qur'an and teaches it," to manifest such noble manners as indicate his virtue and sincerity, and that is to be humble within himself when he sits in his place, and not to be haughty within himself.

Facing the Qiblah

I prefer for him to face the Qiblah in his sitting, due to the saying of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), "The most virtuous sittings are those where the Qiblah is faced."

Accommodating Young and Old, Rich and Poor, Alike

He should be humble towards the one whom he is teaching the Qur'an and turn to him in a beautiful manner. It befits him to treat every person whom he teaches in the way that is best for his like. If the elder, younger and very young are learning from him, and the rich and the poor, it befits him to fulfil everyone's right completely and to hold to justice if he intends Allah by his teaching of the Qur'an. Thus, it neither befits him to bring the rich man near but keep the poor man far away, nor to be gentle with the rich man but harsh with the poor man. If he does this, he will have been unjust in his action, and his duty will be to treat them equally. Moreover, it befits him to beware

within himself of humility towards the rich and arrogance towards the poor. Rather, he should be humble towards the poor person, drawing him near in his sitting and showing affection for him, thus endearing himself to Allah, Mighty and Majestic.

49 – Abu Bakr b. Abi Dawud narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. al-Jarrah al-Azdi and Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Daqiqi narrated to us, they said: Ja'far b. 'Awn narrated to us, he said: Abu Ja'far al-Razi informed us, from al-Rabi' b. Anas regarding the saying of Allah Exalted, "Do not swell your cheek (with pride) towards the people"[43], he said, "The rich and the poor should be equal before you when teaching."

50 – Abu Bakr b. Abi Dawud narrated to us, he said: Bishr b. Khalid narrated to us, he said: Shababah i.e. Ibn Sawwar narrated to us, from Abu Ja'far al-Razi, from al-Rabi' b. Anas, from Abu l-'Aliyah, regarding the saying of Allah Exalted, "Do not swell your cheek (with pride) towards the people"[44], he said, "The rich and the poor should be equal before you when teaching."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: He should manifest in this the etiquettes that Allah taught His Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) when He commanded him to bring the poor near, "And do not let your eyes go beyond them"[45]. This happened when some people intended the world and so wished the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to bring their sitting close to him and to raise their treatment above the others who were poor. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) acceded to their request, not because he intended the world but in order to bring their hearts closer to Islam. Allah then guided His Prophet to the most noble manners before Him, commanding him to bring the poor near, open out to them and have patience with them, and to keep away the rich who incline towards the world. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did this, and this is a fundamental required by whoever sits to teach the Qur'an or other knowledge:

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[43] Luqman, 31:18

[44] Luqman, 31:18

[45] al-Kahf (The Cave), 18:28

he must incorporate it in his character and impose it upon himself, if he intends Allah by it. I shall mention what has been narrated regarding this, so that the reader of the book may understand that with which he will draw nearer to Allah, Mighty and Majestic, teaching recitation for the sake of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, and expecting his reward from Allah, not from the creatures.

51 – Abu l-Qasim 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-'Aziz [i.e. the Hafiz al-Baghawi] narrated to us, he said: Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Yahya b. Sa'id al-Qattan [the Cotton-Trader] narrated to us, he said: 'Amr b. Muhammad al-'Anqazi narrated to us, he said: Asbat narrated to us, from al-Suddi, from Abu Sa'id al-Azdi who was the reciter of the Azd, from Abu l-Kunud, from Khabbab b. al-Aratt, regarding the saying of Allah Exalted, "Do not send away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening seeking His Face ..." until His saying, "... that you would be amongst the unjust"[46], he said: al-Aqra' b. Habis al-Tamimi and 'Uyaynah b. Hisn al-Fizari came and found the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) with Suhayb, Bilal, 'Ammar and Khabbab, sitting amongst groups of oppressed believers. The two [chiefs] said, "We would like you to set aside a sitting for us, by which the Arabs will recognise us. We come to you and feel ashamed that the Arabs should see us with these slaves, so when we come to you, keep them away from us," – or words to that effect, "But when we are finished, sit with them if you so wish." He replied, "All right." They said, "Then write for us a covenant over you." So he called for a parchment and called 'Ali to write, whilst we were sitting to one side. Then Jibril descended and conveyed, "Do not send away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening seeking His Face. You are not responsible for their reckoning at all, and they are not responsible for your reckoning at all, that you push them away and be amongst the unjust." He then referred to al-Aqra' and 'Uyaynah, saying, "Thus did we test some of them with others, that they might say, 'Did Allah bestow His Favour upon these, from amongst us all?' Is not Allah more Knowing about those who are grateful?" He, Mighty and Majestic, then said, "When they come to you, those who believe in our signs, then say, 'Peace be upon you. Your Lord has decreed Mercy upon Himself'."[47] So we drew near to him until we placed our knees against his

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[46] al-An'am (Cattle), 6:52

[47] al-An'am (Cattle), 6:52-54

knees. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to sit with us until when he wished to go, he would stand and leave us. Then Allah Exalted revealed, "Have patience by yourself with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face, and do not allow your eyes to go beyond them, as you seek the ornaments of the worldly life." He is saying: (do not allow) your eyes to go beyond them and seek to sit with the nobles. "And do not follow him whose heart we have diverted from Our remembrance," i.e. 'Uyaynah and al-Aqra', "who follows his desires and his matter has gone beyond all bounds."[48] He then struck for them the similitude of the two men and the similitude of the worldly life. So then we used to sit with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) until we reached the time when he would usually get up; then we would make our way, and leave him to get up.

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Those who have most right to follow this after the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) are the people of the Qur'an when they sit to teach the Qur'an, seeking by it the Face of Allah, Mighty and Majestic.

52- Al-Firyabi narrated to us: Yazid b. Khalid b. Mawhab al-Ramli narrated to us, he said: 'Isa b. Yunus narrated to us, from Harun b. Abi Waki', who said: I heard Zadhan Abu 'Umar saying: I entered upon Ibn Mas'ud and found that the sellers of silk and Yemeni cloth had preceded me to the gathering, so I called to him, "O 'Abdullah! Because I am a blind man you brought these people near and kept me far away?" He said, "Bring him near," so I drew near until there was no one sitting between me and him.

Testing the Student before Teaching in Earnest

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: When someone comes to learn recitation from him, whether the student is young, old or a child, I prefer him to test each one of them before teaching him Surat al-Baqarah. He should test him in order to know what he has of Surat al-Fatihah plus a quarter of a seventh [i.e. one twenty-eighth part of the Qur'an] or more, by which he can fulfil his

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[48] al-Kahf (The Cave), 18:28

prayer and can suitably lead the prayers if required. If he knows this well and his learning has been from the written word, he corrects and rectifies his pronunciation such that it is suitable for him to fulfil his obligations. He then begins teaching him from Surat al-Baqarah.

Listening to the Student's Recitation

Further, I prefer the teacher, when someone is learning recitation from him, to listen to his student well and not to be distracted from him by conversation or such like. In this way, it is more likely that the student will benefit from his recitation; the teacher will also benefit, and ponder deeply what he hears from another, for sometimes his listening to the Qur'an from another will have extra benefit and tremendous reward. He will also implement the saying of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, "When the Qur'an is recited, listen to it and observe silence, that you may be shown mercy."[49] Thus, if he does not engage in conversation with another but rather observes silence before the recitation, Mercy from Allah will overtake him and it will be more beneficial for his student. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud, "Recite to me." He said, "O Messenger of Allah! Should I recite to you when it was revealed to you?" He replied, "Truly, I love to hear it from another."

53 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Balkhi narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. al-Mubarak informed us, he said: Sufyan informed us, from Sulayman i.e. al-A'mash [The Blear-Eyed], from Ibrahim, from 'Abidah, from Ibn Mas'ud, who said: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to me, "Recite to me." I said, "Should I recite to you when it was revealed to you?" He replied, "Truly, I love to hear it from another." So I started reciting from the beginning of Surat al-Nisa' until when I reached, "So how (will it be) when We bring a witness from every nation, and We bring you as a witness over these?"[50] I saw his eyes overflowing, shedding tears, and he said to me, "Enough!"

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[49] al-A'raf (The Heights), 7:204

[50] al-Nisa' (Women), 4:41

I prefer for the one teaching that there should be no more than one student reciting to him at any one time during the time of study, for that is more beneficial for everyone concerned. However, when he is teaching recitation there is no harm in his reciting to a group of students who repeat [the ayat].

Humility towards the Student, even when he Errs

It befits the teacher, when the student recites the Qur'an and errs or makes a mistake, not to be harsh with him but rather to be gentle with him; not to be angry at him but rather to be patient with him. This is because I fear that if he is angry at him, he will be repelled from him and is likely not to return to the mosque again. It has been related from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said, "Teach and do not behave harshly, for the teacher is better than the harsh critic." He (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) also said, "You have only been sent to make matters easy; you have not been sent to make matters difficult."

54 – Hamid b. Shu'ayb al-Balkhi narrated to us, he said: Bishr b. al-Walid narrated to us; [H][51] 'Umar b. Ayyub al-Saqati also narrated to us, he said: al-Hasan b. 'Arafah narrated to us; they both said: Isma'il b. 'Ayyash narrated to us, from Humayd b. Abi Suwayd, from 'Ata' b. Abi Rabah, from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Teach, and do not behave harshly, for the teacher is better than the harsh critic."

55 – Abu l-Qasim 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-'Aziz narrated to us, he said: 'Ali b. al-Ja'd narrated to us, he said: Shu'bah informed us, from Abu l-Tayyah, who said: I heard Anas b. Malik narrating from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said, "Make matters easy and do not make them difficult. Make matters calm and do not repel people."

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51 [Translator's note:] The "H" here stands for *Tahwil* (from the root HWL), which means "another sub-chain of narration" in Hadith terminology. In this case, two sub-chains of two reporters each link the author al-Ajurri with one of his authorities, Isma'il b. 'Ayyash.

56 – Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi informed us, he said: Muhammad b. Bakkar narrated to us, he said: 'Anbasah b. 'Abd al-Wahid narrated to us: from 'Amr b. 'Amir al-Bajali who said: 'Umar b. al-Khattab said, "Learn knowledge, and learn calmness and forbearance for the sake of knowledge. Humble yourselves to those whom you teach, and let those whom you teach humble themselves to you. Do not be tyrannical people of knowledge, lest your knowledge not spread because of your ignorance."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Whoever has these qualities, those learning recitation from him will benefit from him.

Avoiding Material Benefit from Teaching the Qur'an

I then say: It befits one who teaches the Qur'an for the sake of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, to safeguard himself from seeking to have his needs fulfilled by the one who learns the Qur'an from him. He should neither take him as a servant nor burden him with a need to fulfil. I prefer for him that when he has a need, he entrusts it to one who does not learn the Qur'an from him. I prefer for him that he protects the Qur'an from being used to fulfil his needs; if he is in need of something, he should ask his Generous Master to fulfil it and then show gratitude to the one at whose hands this happens, for that is his duty.

Several reports have been related to me that provide evidence for what I have said, so I shall now mention them so that the reader of our book may increase in perception, if Allah Exalted wills.

57 – Abu l-Fadl al-'Abbas b. Yusuf al-Shakali narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. al-Jarrah al-Adhani narrated to us, he said: al-Hasan b. al-Rabi' al-Burani narrated to us, he said: I was with 'Abdullah b. Idris. When I got up to leave, he said to me, "Ask about the price of potash (in the market)." After I had walked out he sent for me to return and said to me, "Do not ask (about the price), for you write down hadith from me and I dislike to request the fulfilment of a need from anyone who hears hadith from me."

58 – Abu l-Fadl narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. al-Jarrah narrated to us, he said: Khalaf b. Tamim said: My father died with a debt outstanding, so I came to Hamzah al-Zayyat [the Oil-Trader][52] and asked him to speak to the creditor to waive part of my father's debt. Hamzah replied, "Woe to you! He does surely learn the Qur'an from me, and I dislike to even drink water from the house of one who learns the Qur'an from me."

59 – Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: al-Fadl b. Ziyad narrated to us, he said: 'Abd al-Samad b. Yazid narrated to us, he said: I heard al-Fudayl b. 'Iyad saying, "It befits a bearer of the Qur'an that he should not be in need of any of the people, whether the Caliph or anyone beneath him. Rather, the people should be in need of him."[53]

60 – Hamid b. Shu'ayb al-Balkhi narrated to us, he said: Surayj b. Yunus narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. Sulayman al-Razi and Abu l-Nadr narrated to us: from Abu Ja'far al-Razi, from al-Rabi' b. Anas who said: It is written in the Torah, "Teach free of charge, as you were taught free of charge."

61 – Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Sufi narrated to us, he said: Shuja' b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: Isma'il b. Ibrahim narrated to us: from Hisham al-Dastawa'i, from Yahya b. Abi Kathir, from Abu Rashid al-Hubrani who said: 'Abd al-Rahman b. Shibl said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Recite the Qur'an, without going to extremes in it or falling short regarding it. Do not eat by it. Do not be arrogant upon it [in one version: Do not increase your wealth by it]."

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52 [Translator's note:] Hamzah al-Zayyat (80-156 H) of Kufa was one of the Seven Great Reciters of the Qur'an, i.e. one of the authorities for the Seven Recitations.

53 [Translator's note:] See also narration no. 40.

62 – Abu l-'Abbas Ahmad b. Sahl al-Ushnani [The Potash-Trader] narrated to us, he said: Bishr b. al-Walid narrated to us, he said: Fulayh b. Sulayman informed us, from 'Abdullah b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Ma'mar, from Sa'id b. Yasar, from Abu Hurayrah who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Whoever learns knowledge by which the Face of Allah is sought, and only learns it in order to attain the possessions of the world, will not even smell the fragrance of the Garden on the Day of Resurrection."

63 – Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Makhlad informed us, he said: Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Hassani narrated to us, he said: Waki' narrated to us, he said: Sufyan narrated to us, from Waqid the freed-slave of Zayd b. Khulaydah, from Zadhan who said, "Whoever recites the Qur'an to ask for sustenance from the people will come on the Day of Resurrection with his face being only bone, with no flesh upon it."

64 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: Shu'ayb b. Ayyub narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Numayr narrated to us, he said: Mu'awiyah al-Nasri narrated to us, from al-Dahhak, from al-Aswad b. Yazid – and 'Alqamah, according to others besides Shu'ayb, whilst I do not think Shu'ayb mentioned 'Alqamah – who said: 'Abdullah i.e. Ibn Mas'ud said, "Were the people of knowledge to protect knowledge and place it only before those who deserve it, they would be the leaders of the people of their time. However, they have spent it for the people of this world in order to gain some of their world, so they have become humiliated in the eyes of its people. I heard your Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) say, 'Whoever makes all his concerns into one concern, the concern of his hereafter, Allah suffices him for his worldly concerns. Whoever is fully-occupied by his concerns regarding the situations of the world, Allah does not care in which of its valleys he perishes'."

65 – Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Makhlad narrated to us, he said: Ibrahim b. Mahdi narrated to us, he said: Ahmad b. 'Abdullah b. Khayrun [or Fayroz] narrated to us, he said: al-'Abbas b. Bakkar al-Dabbi narrated to us, he said: 'Isa b. 'Umar al-Nahwi [the Grammarian] said: I came and stood in the presence

of al-Hasan [al-Basri] and heard him saying, "The reciters of this Qur'an are three types of men. One man recites it and treats it as a commodity, moving it from one land to another. Another man recites it, establishing its letters upright but wasting its limits. He says, 'By Allah! I truly do not miss a single letter of the Qur'an!' May Allah fill the graveyards with such people and empty the houses of them, for by Allah, they are more strongly arrogant than the king upon his throne or the preacher upon his pulpit! Another man recites it, spending his night awake and his day thirsty, and withholds his lusts by it. Such people kneel in their hooded cloaks and remain still in their prayer-chambers. Because of them does Allah prevent the enemy from us, and because of them does Allah water us with rain. This class of the people of the Qur'an is rarer than red sulphur."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: The reports carrying this meaning are numerous. My intention with this is sincere advice to the people of the Qur'an, that their efforts may not be nullified. Were they to seek worldly honour by the Qur'an they would be deprived of the honour of the Hereafter, for they would have spent the Qur'an for the people of the world out of greed for their world – may Allah give refuge to the bearers of the Qur'an from that! Thus, it befits the one who sits to teach the Qur'an to the Muslims to become ennobled by the etiquettes of the Qur'an, hoping for his reward from Allah Exalted, allowing the Qur'an to absolve him from being in any need towards the creatures, being humble in himself that he may be elevated before Allah, Mighty and Majestic.

66 – 'Ali b. Ishaq b. Zatiya narrated to us, he said: 'Ubaydullah b. 'Umar al-Qawariri [The Crystal-Seller] narrated to us, he said: Hammad b. Zayd narrated to us, he said: I heard Ayyub [al-Sakhtiani] saying, "It befits the person of knowledge to place ashes upon his head, humbling himself before Allah, Mighty and Majestic."

Chapter Eight

Mention of the Character of the One Who Learns the Qur'an from the Teacher

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Whoever recites the Qur'an to a teacher and receives (instruction in) recitation from him, it befits him to show good manners in sitting before his teacher. He should humble himself in his sitting and be attentive towards his teacher. If his teacher reprimands him, he should bear this. If he scolds him, he should bear this also, be gentle with him and stick to holding him in awe and being shy before him.

Etiquettes of Receiving Instruction

I prefer that the student should receive instruction in what he knows he can preserve accurately. He knows himself best, so if he knows that he cannot manage more than five ayat at a time, he should not ask for more. If he knows that he cannot manage more than three ayat at a time, he should not ask to receive five. If the teacher only instructs him in three ayat and he knows in himself that he can manage five, he should ask him as gently as possible to increase the instruction. If the teacher refuses, he should not annoy him with repeated requests but should have patience with the teacher's intention regarding him, for if he does this it will lead to him receiving increased instruction from his teacher, if Allah wills.

It does not befit him to become annoyed at his teacher, lest the latter have no regard for him. When his teacher instructs him, he should thank him for that, pray for him and hold him in high esteem. He should not be rough with his teacher if his teacher is harsh with him. He should honour his teacher even if his teacher does not honour him.

You should be shy before your teacher even if he is not shy before you. You should impose upon yourself the duty of fulfilling his right upon you, for then it is likely that he will recognise your right upon him, for the people of the Qur'an are people of goodness, awakening and manners. They recognise the

truth against themselves. So if he is heedless of the right that is due to you, do not be heedless of the right that is due to him upon you. This is because Allah, Mighty and Majestic, has commanded you to recognise the right of the person of knowledge and commanded you to obey the people of knowledge, and thus did he also command the Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

67 – Abu Shu'ayb 'Abdullah b. al-Hasan al-Harrani narrated to us, he said: Ahmad b. 'Isa al-Khayr (or al-Hibr, "The Learned One") al-Misri [the Egyptian] narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Wahb narrated to us, from Malik b. al-Khayr al-Zabadi of the people of Yemen, from Abu Qabil al-Ma'afiri, from 'Ubadah b. al-Samit who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "He is not of my nation, the one who does not honour our elder, have mercy on our youngster, and recognise our person of knowledge."

Ahmad b. Hanbal said, "It means he does not recognise his right."

68 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Qutaybah b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: Ibn Lahi'ah narrated to us, from Jamil al-Aslami, from Sahl b. Sa'd al-Sa'idi who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "O Allah! Let a time not find me, and let me not find a time, when neither the person of knowledge is followed nor are people ashamed before a forbearing one. Their hearts are the hearts of the dumb, while their tongues are the tongues of the eloquent."[54]

69 – Ibrahim b. al-Haytham al-Naqid informed us: Abu Ma'mar al-Qati'i reported to us, he said: Sufyan narrated to us, from al-Zuhri, from Abu Salamah who said, "Had I been gentle with Ibn 'Abbas, I would have gained knowledge from him."

70 – Ahmad b. Sahl al-Ushnani [the Potash-Seller] narrated to us, he said: al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. al-Aswad narrated to us, he said: Yahya b. Adam narrated to us, he said: Shurayk narrated to us, from Layth, from Mujahid regarding the saying of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those in authority amongst you,"[55] he said, "The people of understanding and knowledge."

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54 "Dumb": *'ajam* (lit., 'non-Arabs'); "Eloquent": *'Arab* (lit., 'Arabs')

55 al-Nisa' (Women), 4:59

71 – Yahya b. Adam narrated to us, from Mifdal b. Muhalhal, from Mughirah, from Ibrahim [al-Nakh'i], similarly.

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Moreover, it befits the one who has been instructed by the teacher to not go beyond that instruction if he likes to receive instruction from that teacher. Further, when he sits with another he should only receive instruction from him as he did from his first teacher, I mean that he should not receive a mode of recitation different to the one he received from his teacher. This is easier for him to become accustomed to and more correct for his recitation, and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has said, "Recite as you have been taught."

72 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: Abu Hisham al-Rifa'i narrated to us, he said: Abu Bakr b. 'Ayyash narrated to us, he said: 'Asim narrated to us, from Zirr, from 'Abdullah i.e. Ibn Mas'ud, who said: I said to a man, "Teach me thirty ayat from Surat al-Ahqaf." He instructed me differently to the way the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) had taught me to recite, so I said to another man, "Teach me thirty ayat from Surat al-Ahqaf." He instructed me differently to the way the first man had taught me to recite, so I brought them to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who became angry. 'Ali b. Abi Talib was sitting there, and he said, "He has said to you, 'Recite as you have been taught'."

73 – Ibn Sa'id also narrated to us, he said: Ahmad b. Sinan al-Qattan [the Cotton-Trader] said: Yazid b. Harun narrated to us, he said: Shurayk reported to us, from 'Asim, from Zirr, from 'Abdullah who said: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) instructed me in the recitation of a surah. I later entered the mosque and asked, "Is there any amongst you who can recite?" One of the people stood up and replied, "I can." He recited the surah that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) had taught me, but differently to the way the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) recited it. So we proceeded to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and said, "O Messenger of Allah! We have differed in our recitation." The face of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) changed, and 'Ali said, "Truly, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him

peace) says, 'Those before you only perished because of their disunity, so every person should recite as he was instructed'."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Whoever is content with the instruction of his teacher and does not go beyond it is likely to remain regular upon it, and I prefer that for him. This is because if the teacher sees that his student has learnt that which he did not instruct him in, the teacher will not value his instructing the student and the instructing will become burdensome for the teacher, and the consequences of that are not praiseworthy.

I prefer for him that when he recites to his teacher, he should not cease so that it is the teacher who decides when to stop. If he becomes in need of something and the teacher had intended that he should take a hundred ayat from him so that he decides to stop reciting after fifty ayat, he should inform his teacher of his excuse beforehand so that it is the teacher who stops him. It befits him to pay attention to the one instructing or teaching him, and not to be distracted by others. If the teacher becomes distracted from him by speaking to someone, the student must pause his recitation whilst his teacher is conversing until he returns to listening to him.

I prefer for him that when he has completed reciting to his teacher, if he is in the mosque and wishes to leave, he should leave with dignity and rehearse on the way what he has been instructed in. However, if he prefers to stay and learn from another he can do so. If he remains in the mosque, but not in the presence of his teacher, he should perform some prayers and earn goodness, mention and remember Allah Exalted, thanking him for what He has taught him of His Book, or sit confining himself to the mosque. He should do the latter disliking to leave out of fear that his sight falls on something that is not lawful for him or that he accompanies someone whose company is not good. Thus if he stays in the mosque, the ruling is that he should discipline himself whilst sitting in the mosque lest he delve into that which does not concern him. Further, he should beware of violating people's honour and beware also of delving into worldly talk and unnecessary speech. This is because the soul may be favourably-inclined towards what I have mentioned, even though it will not bring any benefit and will have undesirable consequences. He should manifest such noble manners in his staying and leaving as to resemble the people of the Qur'an, and Allah is the granter of capability for that.

Chapter Nine

Etiquettes of the Reciters When Reciting the Qur'an, That It Does Not Befit Them to Ignore

Purification and Cleaning the Teeth

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: I prefer for whoever wishes to recite the Qur'an by day or night to purify himself [with the ritual washing], and to use the tooth-stick. This is in order to honour the Qur'an, for he is going to recite the words of the Lord, Mighty and Majestic. Further, the angels draw near to him when he recites the Qur'an and one of them places his mouth against his mouth if he has used the tooth-stick, so that whenever he recites an ayah, the angel takes it with his mouth. If he has not used the tooth-stick, the angel stays away from him. Therefore, it is not fitting for you, O people of the Qur'an, that the angel should stay away from you, so display the correct manners, for every one of you dislikes to sit with his brothers if he has not used his tooth-stick.

Reciting from the Mushaf

I prefer that he recites often from the mushaf (written copy of the Qur'an), due to the virtue of the one reciting from it. It is only fitting to carry the mushaf when he is in a state of purity. If he wishes to recite from the mushaf when he is not in a state of purity, there is no harm, but he should not touch it; rather, he should turn the pages of the mushaf with an object, and only touch the mushaf when he is in a state of purity.

Reciting when in a State of Impurity

It befits the reciter if he passes wind during recitation to pause his recitation until the wind has passed. If he then wishes to perform his ablution and then continue reciting in a state of purity then that is more virtuous, but if he continues reciting without being in a state of purity, there is no harm. If he yawns while reciting, he should pause his recitation until he has completed yawning. Neither the one in a state of major (sexual) impurity nor the menstruating one should recite the Qur'an, not one ayah and not even a

single letter. However, there is no harm if he or she glorifies, praises or magnifies Allah, or pronounces the call to prayer.

Prostrations of Recitation

I prefer the reciter to discipline himself regarding the prostrations of the Qur'an: every time he comes across a prostration, he should prostrate. In the Qur'an there are fifteen prostrations, although it is also said that there are fourteen or eleven. The view that I prefer is that he should prostrate every time a prostration passes him, for that way he pleases his Lord and infuriates his enemy, Satan.[56]

74 – It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah, from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said, "When the son of Adam recites a (verse of) prostration and prostrates, Satan departs from him weeping, saying, 'Woe to him! The son of Adam was ordered to prostrate and he prostrated, so for him is the Garden. I was ordered to prostrate but disobeyed, so for me is the Fire'."

I prefer for the one who, when rehearsing his recitation whilst walking in the street, comes across a prostration, to face the Qiblah and indicate a prostration by lowering his head. Similarly if he is riding and rehearsing his recitation and comes across a prostration, he should prostrate by indicating with his head towards the Qiblah, if that is possible.

Facing the Qiblah if Seated when Reciting

I prefer one who is sitting and reciting to face the Qiblah if that is possible, due to the saying of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), "The best sittings are those where the Qiblah is faced."

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[56] [Translator's note:] The position that there are fifteen prostrations of recitation (including two in Surat al-Hajj and one in Surat Sad) is that of Ahmad, Layth, and Ishaq b. Rahwayh, Ibn Wahb and Ibn Habib from the Malikis, and Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Surayh from the Shafi'is. The position of fourteen prostrations (including only one in Surat al-Hajj) is that of Abu Hanifah. The position of eleven prostrations (omitting the three prostrations in the short Mufassal surahs that comprise the last seventh of the Qur'an) is that of the Malikis and originally that of Shafi'i. Imam Shafi'i's later position was that there are fourteen prostrations, including those of the Mufassal surahs and two in Surat al-Hajj but excluding that of Surat Sad. Note that Imam al-Ajurri does not say that the reciter should follow a particular Madhhab in this issue, but simply directs him to do that which is most pleasing to his Lord.

Reciting with Sorrow and Contemplation

I also prefer that one who recites the Qur'an should recite with sorrow, and weep if he is able; if he is not able to weep, then he should attempt to weep.

I also prefer for him to reflect upon his recitation, to ponder deeply what he recites, and to lower the glance away from whatever distracts the heart. I love most that he should abandon every preoccupation until his period of study is complete, so that his mind may be attentive and that he should not be busy with anything besides the Speech of his Master.

I prefer that when he is studying and an ayah of mercy passes by him, that he should pray to his Generous Master. When an ayah of punishment passes by him, he should seek Allah's refuge from the Fire. When he passes by an ayah of the transcendence of Allah above what the people of falsehood say, he should glorify Allah and declare His Majesty. If drowsiness overcomes him while he is reciting, the ruling is that he should stop reciting and sleep so that he can recite later when he understands what he is reciting.

Traditions Related in this Regard

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All that I have commanded the reciter of t he Qur'an to do is in accordance with the Sunnah and the statements of the people of knowledge, of which I shall mention what comes to my mind, if Allah wills.

75 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Qutaybah b. Sa'id narrated to us, he said: al-Layth b. Sa'd narrated to us, he said: 'Uqayl b. Khalid narrated to us, from al-Zuhri who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "When one of you cleans his mouth with the tooth-stick and then stands to recite, the angel surrounds him, listening to the Qur'an, until he places his mouth against his mouth. No ayah comes out of his mouth without passing into the angel's mouth. If he stands to recite without cleaning his mouth with the tooth-stick, the angel surrounds him but does not place his mouth against his."

76 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Qutaybah narrated to us, he said: Sufyan b. 'Uyaynah narrated to us, from al-Hasan b. 'Ubaydullah al-Nakh'i,

from Sa'd b. 'Ubaydah, from Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, that 'Ali used to encourage and command use of the tooth-stick, and said, "Truly, when a man stands to pray the angel draws near to him, listening to the Qur'an. He continues to draw near to him until he places his mouth against his mouth, so that any ayah he utters enters the angel's interior."

77 – Abu Muhammad 'Abdullah b. al-'Abbas al-Tayalisi [the Marquee-Maker] narrated to us, he said: Ishaq b. Mansur al-Kawsaj narrated to us, he said: I asked Ahmad [b. Hanbal] about recitation without ablution. He replied, "There is no harm in it, but only one with ablution should recite from the mushaf." Ishaq i.e. Ibn Rahwayh said, "It is as he said: an example that has been set and followed (*sunnah masnunah*)."

78 – Abu Nasr Muhammad b. Kurdi narrated to us, he said: Abu Bakr al-Marwazi narrated to us, he said, "Abu 'Abdullah [i.e. Ahmad b. Hanbal] would sometimes recite from the mushaf whilst he was not in a state of purity, but he would not touch it. Rather, he would take a stick or other object in his hand in order to turn the pages."

79 – 'Abdullah b. al-'Abbas al-Tayalisi [the Marquee-Maker] narrated to us, he said: al-Musharraf b. Aban narrated to us, he said: Ibn 'Uyaynah narrated to us, from Zirr who said: I asked 'Ata', "If I pass wind whilst I am reciting the Qur'an?" He replied, "Pause reciting until the wind has passed."

80 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad Ibn Sa'id narrated to us: al-Husayn b. al-Hasan al-Marwazi narrated to us: Ibn al-Mubarak reported to us: 'Uthman b. al-Aswad narrated to us, from Mujahid who said, "If you yawn whilst reciting, pause until the yawning departs from you."

81 – Ahmad b. Yahya al-Hulwani informed us: Muhammad b. al-Sabbah al-Dawlani narrated to us: Waki' narrated to us, he said: Hisham [b. 'Urwah] narrated to us, from his father ['Urwah b. al-Zubayr], from 'Aishah that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "If one of you feels drowsy he should sleep, for otherwise he will wish to seek forgiveness but curse himself instead."

82 – Abu l-Qasim 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-'Aziz narrated to us, he said: 'Ali b. al-Ja'd narrated to us, he said: Shu'bah reported to us: 'Amr b. Murrah informed me, he said: I heard 'Abdullah b. Salamah saying: I entered upon 'Ali b. Abi Talib, who said, "Nothing would veil or bar the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) from reciting the Qur'an except major (sexual) impurity."

83 – Ahmad b. Yahya al-Hulwani informed us: Yahya b. 'Abd al-Hamid al-Hammami narrated to us: Isma'il b. 'Ayyash narrated to us, from Musa b. 'Uqbah, from Nafi', from Ibn 'Umar, that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Neither the one in a state of major (sexual) impurity nor the menstruating one should recite anything from the Qur'an."

Importance of these Etiquettes

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All that I have mentioned, it befits the people of the Qur'an to learn these etiquettes and not be heedless of them. When they have finished reciting the Qur'an they should consider themselves by taking them to account. If their selves show acceptance of what their Generous Master has encouraged them to do of their duty of fulfilling His obligations and avoiding His prohibitions, they should praise Him for that and thank Allah, Mighty and Majestic, for what He has enabled them to do. If they learn that their selves are turning away from what their Generous Master has encouraged them to do and care little about it, they should seek Allah's forgiveness for their shortcoming. Further, they should ask Him to move them from this state that does not befit the people of the Qur'an, and which their Master does not like for them, to a state that He likes, for truly He does not cut off the one who seeks shelter in Him.

Whoever fulfils this description will find the benefit of reciting the Qur'an in all his affairs, and all that he loves of the blessings of the Qur'an will return to him in this world and the Hereafter, if Allah wills.

84 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad Ibn Sa'id informed us: al-Husayn b. al-Hasan narrated to us: Ibn al-Mubarak reported to us: Hammam reported to us, from Qatadah who said, "No-one sits with this Qur'an except that he stands up from it with either gain or loss, for this is the Decree of Allah who has decreed that it is, 'a Cure and a Mercy for the believers, and increases the wrongdoers only in Loss'[57]."

85 – Ibrahim b. Musa al-Jawzi informed us: Yusuf Ibn Musa al-Qattan [the Cotton-Trader] narrated to us: 'Amr b. Humran narrated to us, from Sa'id, from Qatadah regarding the saying of the Exalted, "The pure land, its plants grow by the permission of its Lord,"[58] he said, "The pure land is the believer: he heard the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, and preserved it, held to it and benefited from it, like this land that is irrigated by rainfall so it produces vegetation and pasture." As for "the corrupt, nothing grows except painfully"[59] he said, "i.e. except with difficulty. This is the similitude of the disbeliever who has heard the Qur'an but has not understood it, held to it or benefited from it, like this corrupt land that is irrigated by rainfall but does not produce any vegetation or pasture."

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57 al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:82

58 al-A'raf (The Heights), 7:58

59 al-A'raf (The Heights), 7:58

Chapter Ten

Reciting the Qur'an with a Beautiful Voice

86 – Al-Firyabi informed us, he said: Safwan b. Salih narrated to us, he said: Muhammad b. Shu'ayb narrated to us, he said: al-Awza'i reported to us, from Isma'il b. 'Ubaydullah that he narrated to him from Fudalah b. 'Ubayd who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Allah is surely more attentive to a man who has a beautiful voice when reciting the Qur'an than the owner of a slave-girl is to the slave-girl (when she sings)."

Al-Awza'i said: By "attentive" is meant "listening intently."

87 – Al-Firyabi reported to us, he said: Abu Qudamah and 'Amr b. 'Ali narrated to us, they said: Yahya b. Sa'id narrated to us, from Shu'bah: Talhah b. Musarraf narrated to me, from 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awsajah, from al-Bara' Ibn 'Azib, from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said, "Adorn the Qur'an with your voices."

88 – Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: Salih b. Ahmad b. Hanbal narrated to us, that he asked his father, "His saying (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), 'Adorn the Qur'an with your voices,' what does it mean?" He replied, "To adorn it is to beautify it."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: It befits the one whom Allah has given a good voice for recitation to know that Allah has favoured him with magnificent goodness, and he should therefore recognise the worth of that with which Allah has favoured him. He should recite it for the sake of Allah and not for the sake of the creatures. He should beware of inclining towards wanting to be heard so that the listeners appreciate him, out of desire for the world and inclination towards earning praise and fame from the sons of the world, and the desire to

lead prayer in the presence of kings rather than leading it amongst the general public. Whoever's self inclines towards what I have forbidden him from, I fear for him that his good voice will be an affliction against him. His good voice will only benefit him when he has fear and awe of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, both privately and publicly, and when his aim is that people hear the Qur'an from him so that the people of heedlessness wake from their heedlessness and desire what Allah, Mighty and Majestic, has encouraged them to seek and desist from what He has prohibited. Whoever has these qualities will benefit from his good voice, and people will benefit from him.

89 – 'Umar b. Ayyub al-Saqati narrated to us, he said: 'Ubaydullah b. 'Umar al-Qawariri [the Crystal-Seller] narrated to us, he said: 'Abdullah b. Ja'far narrated to us, he said: Ibrahim narrated to us, from Abu l-Zubayr, from Jabir who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Truly, the person having the best voice with the Qur'an is the one who, when you hear him recite, you think that he fears Allah, Mighty and Majestic."

90 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Balkhi narrated to us, he said: Ibn al-Mubarak narrated to us, he said: Yunus b. Yazid reported to us, from al-Zuhri who said: It reached us that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Truly, one of the people having the best voice with the Qur'an is the one who, when you hear him recite, you are made to think that he fears Allah, Mighty and Majestic."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: I dislike recitation with melodies and artificial musical voices, for these are disliked by many of the people of knowledge such as Yazid b. Harun, al-Asma'i, Ahmad b. Hanbal, Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim b. Sallam, Sufyan b. 'Uyaynah and several other people of knowledge. Rather, they advise the reciter to be sorrowful and attempt to weep when reciting, and to be humble from his heart.

91 – Al-Firyabi narrated to us, he said: al-Haytham b. Ayyub al-Taliqani narrated to us, he said: al-Walid b. Muslim narrated to us, from Abu Rafi' Isma'il b. Rafi' who said: Ibn Abi Mulaykah al-Ahwal [the Cross-Eyed] narrated to me, from 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Sa'ib who said: Sa'd b. Malik came

to us after he had lost his sight. I went to greet him and he asked who I was, so I introduced myself. He said, "Welcome, O son of my brother! It has reached me that you have a good voice with the Qur'an. I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, 'Truly, this Qur'an descended with sorrow: when you recite it, weep. If you do not weep, attempt to weep. Chant it, for whoever does not chant it is not of us'."

92 – Al-Firyabi also informed me, he said: Isma'il b. Yusuf Ibn 'Ata' al-Riyahi narrated to us, he said: 'Awn b. 'Amr, brother of Riyah al-Qaysi narrated to us, he said: Sa'id al-Jurayri narrated to us, from 'Abdullah b. Buraydah from his father, who said: the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Recite the Qur'an with sorrow, for it was revealed with sorrow."

Ibn Abi Mulaykah was asked, "What if the person does not have a good voice?" He replied, "He should beautify it as much as possible." Waki' and Ibn 'Uyaynah said that "he who does not chant it" means, "he who does not become independent (of other-than-Allah) by means of it." Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Allah does not listen to anything as He listens to a prophet, having a beautiful voice, who chants the Qur'an loudly."

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: Therefore, I like the one who recites the Qur'an to be sorrowful and attempt to weep when reciting, and for his heart to be humbled and attentive. He should reflect upon the Promises and Warnings so that this may bring about sorrow. Have you not heard Allah's description of those who have this quality, and His informing us of their virtue? He, Mighty and Majestic, said, "Allah has sent down the Best of Speech: a Book, Self-Consistent, Oft-Repeated. Creep from it do the skins of those who fear their Lord; then do their skins and hearts soften to the Remembrance of Allah."[60] Moreover, He condemns people who listen to the Qur'an without their hearts being humbled to it, saying, "Do you then wonder at this Speech? And you laugh, and do not weep, wasting your time in vanities?"[61] i.e. frivolously.

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[60] al-Zumar (The Companies), 23:39

[61] al-Najm (The Star), 53:59-61

Reciting with *Tartil* (Slowly and Rhythmically)

Further, it befits the one who recites the Qur'an to do so with *tartil* (slowly and rhythmically), as Allah Exalted said, "Recite the Qur'an slowly and rhythmically."[62] It is said in its commentary, "Make it clear and lucid." Know that when he recites it slowly, rhythmically and clearly, the listeners will benefit from it and he will benefit himself also, for he will have recited it as he was commanded. Allah Exalted said, "A Recitation which we have divided, that you may recite it to the people gradually."[63] It is said that this means, "At intervals."

93 – Abu Muhammad Yahya b. Muhammad narrated to us, he said: Abu l-Khattab Ziyad b. Yahya narrated to us, he said: Malik b. Su'ayr narrated to us, he said: Ibn Abi Layla narrated to us, from al-Hakim, from Miqsam, from Ibn 'Abbas regarding this ayah, "Recite the Qur'an slowly and rhythmically"[64]: he said, "Make it clear and lucid."

94 – Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: Abu Bakr b. Zanjwayh reported to us, he said: 'Abd al-Razzaq narrated to us, he said: Sufyan reported to us, from 'Ubayd al-Mukattib, from Mujahid, regarding the saying of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, "A Recitation which we have divided, that you may recite it to the people gradually"[65]: he said, "At intervals."

95 – Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sandali [the Sandalwood-Trader] narrated to us, he said: al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Za'farani reported to us, he said: Isma'il b. 'Ulayyah narrated to us, from Ayyub, from Abu Jamrah al-Duba'i who said: I said to Ibn 'Abbas, "I am a quick reciter: I recite the entire Qur'an in three days." He replied, "Were I to recite al-Baqarah in one night, reflecting upon it deeply and reciting it rhythmically, it would be more preferable to me than reciting it as you say."

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62 al-Muzzammil (One Wrapped in a Blanket), 73:4

63 al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:106

64 al-Muzzammil (One Wrapped in a Blanket), 73:4

65 al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:106

96 – Ja'far also narrated to us, he said: Abu Bakr b. Zanjwayh narrated to us, he said: Muhammad b. Yusuf narrated to us, he said: Sufyan narrated to us, from 'Ubayd al-Mukattib who said: Mujahid was asked about a man who recited al-Baqarah and Al-'Imran and a man who recited al-Baqarah only, their recitation, bowing and prostration being of equal length: which of them was more virtuous? He replied, "The one who recited al-Baqarah only." He then recited, "A Recitation which we have divided, that you may recite it to the people gradually."[66]

[66] al-Isra' (The Night-Journey), 17:106

Conclusion

Muhammad b. al-Husayn said: All that I have said, all the manners and etiquettes that I have encouraged, it befits the people of the Qur'an to absorb these in their character and to shun all the vile manners that I have discouraged. Allah is the granter of capability to us and to them towards the path of right conduct by His Favour and Generosity, for He is Powerful over all things, and likely to Respond.

Addendum

The following permission to transmit, by Ahmad b. Rajab b. al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Salami, dated 768 H, appears at the end of the Egyptian manuscript of the book:

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. May Allah bless the Prophet and Chosen One, and all his Family and Companions. To proceed:

The scribe of the Book of the Manners of the Bearers of the Qur'an by al-Ajurri, may Allah have mercy upon him, the Shaykh, Respected Scholar and Spiritual Traveller, Shihab al-Din Abu l-'Abbas Ahmad b. al-'Abbas b. Muhammad of Aleppo [al-Halabi] has heard the book recited to me by the Shaykh, Scholar and Hafiz, Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Mahmud b. Ahmad al-Siwasi, may Allah grant us and them the capability to act upon it.

I informed them first of my chain of authorities for this book and gave them permission to transmit it, along with all that I have permission to transmit and may be transmitted from me. Its transmission is subject to the conditions known to its people.

Written by:

Ahmad b. Rajab b. al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Salami, Damascus (may it be protected by Allah), at the end of Dhu l-Hijjah in the year seven hundred and sixty-eight, praising Allah, invoking blessings and peace upon His Messenger, and seeking Allah's forgiveness. Allah is sufficient for us, an Excellent Protector! May Allah bless our master Muhammad and all his Family and Companions.

Appendix: Analysis of the Narrations mentioned by al-Ajurri

(Abridged from the version of the book edited by Shaykh Muhammad 'Amr b. 'Abd al-Latif, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2nd ed., Beirut, 1407/1987)

1. This narration was also transmitted via Ajurri by Baghawi in his tafsir. The isnad is weak due to Abu Hamzah, a one-eyed butcher from Kufa, who was agreed to be weak. Ahmad, Ibn Ma'in, Daraqutni and others regarded him as being very weak. However, similar narrations from Ibn Mas'ud were transmitted by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and Ahmad. Abu Dawud and Ahmad transmitted from 'Alqamah and al-Aswad that a poor man came to Ibn Mas'ud and said, "I recite the mufassal surahs in one rak'ah." He replied, "Is it chanting quickly like poetry, and scattering it like inferior dates? ..." Muslim transmitted his reply as, "This is chanting quickly like poetry. Truly, some groups of people recite the Qur'an and it does not pass beyond their throats. However, if it affects the heart and becomes rooted firmly there, it benefits ..."

2. The isnad is weak due to Abu 'Ubaydah al-Naji, who was declared weak by Ibn Ma'in, Nasa'i, Daraqutni and others, although in one narration Ibn Ma'in said he was harmless and Ibn Shahin declared him reliable. The narration was not transmitted by anyone besides Ajurri.

3. The isnad is hasan. Transmitted also by Darimi, Musaddad and Abu Nu'aym.

4. The isnad is weak due to Salim al-Makki, the narrator from al-Hasan al-Basri. Salim was declared reliable by Thawri, Ahmad and Ibn 'Adi but declared weak by many authorities due to his poor memory. Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah transmitted from him. The narration was also transmitted by Ibn al-Mubarak, the narrator from Salim, in his *Al-Zuhd*.

5. The isnad is sahih. The statement of Mujahid was also transmitted by Ibn al-Mubarak and Tabari, who also transmitted similar statements from 'Ata', Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ikrimah and Qatadah.

6. The isnad is weak since 'Abd Rabbih (or 'Abd Rabb) b. Ayman is unknown. No-one besides Ajurri transmitted this statement.

7. Similar narrations were transmitted by Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Tayalisi, Hakim and Abu Nu'aym. The hadith was authenticated as sahih or hasan by Dhahabi, Busayri, 'Iraqi, Mundhiri and Albani.

8. The isnad is hasan. See also no. 7.

9. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Hakim, Ibn Majah, Darimi, Ibn Abi Shaybah and Ibn al-Mubarak. The hadith is sahih due to all the supporting narrations.

10. See no. 9.

11. There is no uninterrupted isnad to 'Aishah for this statement, although Khattabi mentions its meaning in explanation of the hadith of 'Abdullah b. 'Amr (no. 10 above). The statement is also narrated from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) by Ibn Mardwayh, Bayhaqi and Hakim with weak isnads.

12. This isnad is weak due to Ibrahim [b. Muslim] al-Hajari, who is agreed to be weak or very weak. Parts of the narration are authentically narrated from the Companions, e.g. Ibn al-Mubarak and Darimi transmitted with trustworthy reporters that 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud said, "Truly, this Qur'an is the banquet of Allah, so whoever enters it is safe." The latter statement was also transmitted from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) by Hakim, but the narration was declared weak by Suyuti and Albani.

13. The hadith is sahih. It was also transmitted by Darimi, Ibn al-Mubarak, Hakim and Tirmidhi, and authenticated by the latter and by Albani.

14. The narration is hasan. Transmitted also by Hakim, Bayhaqi and Ibn al-Mubarak.

15. This hadith is declared to be mawdu' (fabricated) by Ibn al-Jawzi, Dhahabi and Albani. In Ajurri's isnad, Maslamah b. 'Ali (of Damascus, d. before 190 H) is matruk (abandoned), i.e. very weak.

16. This hadith is sahih and was also transmitted on the authority of 'Uthman b. 'Affan by Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ahmad and others.

17. The isnad is weak due to the weakness of 'Abd al-Rahman b. Ishaq. However, the hadith is sahih, cf. no. 16 above.

18. The isnad is very weak due to al-Harith b. Nabhan, who is matruk (abandoned). In this case, he has wrongly reported the isnad, which should be from 'Asim b. Bahdalah (one of the Seven Reciters of the Qur'an) from his shaykh, the Successor Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami from 'Uthman b. 'Affan, as in no. 16 above. However, the hadith is sahih, cf. no. 16 above.

19. The hadith is sahih. It was also transmitted by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud and Abu Nu'aym via Musa b. 'Ali b. Rabah.

20. The hadith is sahih. It was also transmitted by Ahmad, Muslim and Ibn Majah.

21. See no. 20 above.

22. The narration is sahih from Ibn 'Abbas. It was also transmitted by Musaddad, Sa'id b. Mansur, Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn al-Mundhir, Hakim and Bayhaqi.

23. The hadith is sahih, transmitted by Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Darimi and others on the authority of 'Aishah, Mother of the Believers.

24. I have not found this on the authority of 'Isa b. Yunus, but Abu Nu'aym transmitted the same statement from Habib b. Abi 'Amrah with a weak isnad. Even if the isnad were authentic, it would be regarded as a mu'dal hadith (one with two or more consecutive reporters missing), since it speaks of a matter of the Unseen, which cannot be said from one's own opinion. If such a statement is made by a Companion, the stronger view is that it is authoritative, since he or she must have heard it from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). But in this case, both 'Isa and Habib are successors of the Successors, so there are several generations of reporters missing between them and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

25. Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Hakim, who declared it sahih but Dhahabi and Albani declared it weak due to Zabban, who is agreed to be weak. A similar hadith was also transmitted by Hakim, who declared it sahih and Dhahabi agreed, but Ibn Hajar declared it weak. It was also transmitted with three isnads by Tabarani, but Haythami declared these very weak.

26. Transmitted also by Ahmad in *Al-Zuhd* and Abu Nu'aym. The statement was also narrated from Yazid al-Dabbi and Abu 'Ubaydah (possibly the son of 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud). It would appear that Khaythamah took this anecdote from Christian scriptures, for Abu Nu'aym transmitted several of his quotes from the Torah, as well as anecdotes from the Prophets 'Isa, Yahya and Sulayman, upon them be Peace.

27. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Hakim, Darimi and Ibn Abi Shaybah, all via Bashir b. Muhajir, whose reliability is disputed. Ibn Ma'in and 'Ijli declared him reliable whilst Muslim used him as a supporting narrator and Nasa'i declared him harmless. Ahmad, Bukhari, Abu Hatim, Ibn 'Adi, Daraqutni, 'Uqayli and Saji criticised him. Ibn Hajar says that he was accused of being a Murji'ite. The narration was authenticated by Haythami, Busayri, Hakim, Dhahabi and Ibn Kathir but declared weak by Ibn Hajar, Habib al-Rahman al-A'zami and Albani. Ibn Kathir said that it was strengthened by a similar narration of Ahmad and Muslim on the authority of Abu Umamah al-Bahili.

28. Musa b. Ayyub was authenticated by Abu Dawud and Ibn Hibban but disparaged by Ibn Ma'in and Saji. Ibn Hajar therefore regarded him as reliable only when supported by other independent narrators. Iyas b. 'Amir was authenticated by

Ibn Hibban and Ibn Khuzaymah, while 'Ijli declared him harmless and Ibn Abi Hatim was neutral. On this basis, Ibn Hajar authenticated him. However, Dhahabi described him as "not strong" or "not known", and Albani inclined to his view since Dhahabi does not mention him in his *Mizan al-I'tidal*, and only Iyas' nephew Musa narrates from him. The narration was also transmitted by Darimi and Shajari.

29. The isnad contains Baqiyyah b. al-Walid, a mudallis (one who conceals his direct authorities) who has narrated it with the ambiguous statement, "on the authority of." However, supporting narrations were transmitted by Ahmad, Hakim, Musaddad and Abu Ya'la, and the original narration was also transmitted by Hakim and Bayhaqi. Busayri declared the isnad weak due to the weakness of Abu Firas, the narrator from 'Umar. However, Bukhari, 'Abd al-Razzaq and Bayhaqi transmitted a similar report from 'Umar via 'Abdullah b. 'Itbah b. Mas'ud.

30. This is a repeat of no. 29, but this isnad is either weak or interrupted (munqati') because Abu Nadrah is not proved to have narrated directly from 'Umar, only from 'Ali, Abu Musa and Talhah, the latter living for thirteen years after 'Umar's martyrdom. A number of reporters transmitted it with Abu Firas (who is unknown and therefore weak) between Abu Nadrah and 'Umar.

31. The hadith is sahih, as confirmed by Albani. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman* ("Branches of Faith").

32. Transmitted also by Ibn al-Mubarak and Ibn Abi Shaybah, but the isnad has two defects: the weakness of Musa b. 'Ubaydah al-Rabadhi and the discontinuity between his brother 'Abdullah and the Companion Sahl b. Sa'd. However, the hadith is sahih due to supporting narrations of Abu Dawud, Ibn Hibban and Ahmad, and the supporting ahadith of Jabir (no. 31 above) and Abu Sa'id (mentioned by Albani in *al-Sahihah*, no. 258).

33. The isnad is weak due to Musa b. 'Ubaydah al-Rabadhi, but there is a supporting ahadith of 'Umar that is weak as confirmed by Dhahabi and one of Ibn 'Abbas that is declared hasan by Mundhiri. Each one of these three mutually-supporting ahadith is declared hasan by Albani in *Sahih al-Targhib* (1/58). The hadith is a confirmation of Prophethood, for all its prophecies have proved true.

34. This is a repeat of no. 33, with a slightly different isnad.

35. The isnad is weak due to Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. al-Muhajir al-Bajali al-Kufi, who is a weak narrator from whom Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah transmit. However, a similar narration with slight weakness is transmitted by Hakim; it is possibly hasan due to another transmission of it by Tabarani.

36. The isnad is weak due to Khalaf and 'Ata', who both suffered from memory loss towards the end of their lives. However, there is a weak supporting narration transmitted by Ahmad and a sahih one transmitted by Ibn Sa'd.

37. The hadith is hasan, and was also transmitted by Ibn al-Mubarak in *Al-Zuhd* and Muhammad b. Nasr in *Qiyam al-Layl.*

38. This is a repeat of no. 5 above.

39. The isnad is weak, due to the discontinuity (inqita') between al-Musayyib b. Rafi' and Ibn Mas'ud. The Imams of Hadith, Ibn Ma'in, Abu Zur'ah al-Razi and Abu Hatim al-Razi all stated that al-Musayyib did not meet Ibn Mas'ud. Imam Ahmad also transmitted this narration from al-Musayyib in his *Al-Zuhd*, as did Abu Nu'aym via Ahmad.

40. All the narrators in this isnad are reliable. It was also transmitted by Abu Nu'aym via the Hafiz Abu Ya'la of Mosul from 'Abd al-Samad b. Yazid, the companion of al-Fudayl b. 'Iyad.

41. See no. 40.

42. See no. 40.

43. Hudhayfah b. Qatadah al-Mir'ashi and Yusuf b. Asbat were both students of Sufyan al-Thawri. Both of them were mentioned by Ibn 'Imran of Mosul as being among ten people who "were of the people of forbearance of the past, who would look severely at the matter of lawful earning; they would only allow what they knew was lawful (halal) to enter their stomachs, otherwise they would eat dust." Others on this list included Ibrahim b. Adham, Wuhayb b. al-Ward and Dawud al-Ta'i. Similar narrations were transmitted by Abu Nu'aym and al-Shajari.

44. The narrators in this isnad are all reliable. Abu Nu'aym transmitted the same statement with a different sahih isnad that includes 'Abdullah, son of Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal.

45. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Bukhari in *Khalq Af'al al-'Ibad* and Ibn Abi Hatim, all of whom transmitted it as marfu', i.e. a statement of the Prophet (SAWS). The hadith is sahih, taking into account all the routes of narration.

46. Transmitted also by Ahmad and Tirmidhi, who said it was a hasan hadith due to other narrations, since it had a weak isnad. In fact, further supporting narrations (such as the next one) make the hadith sahih.

47. See no. 46 above.

48. This is an extremely feeble isnad, since al-Madi is weak and Aban is abandoned (matruk), being accused of lying by Shu'bah, Ahmad and Ibn Ma'in. Shu'bah said, "My cloak and head-cover are charity for the poor if Aban b. Abi 'Ayyash does not lie when narrating Hadith," and "I would prefer to drink donkeys' urine than to say: Aban narrated to me."

The hadith, "The most virtuous sittings are those where the Qiblah is faced," was transmitted with different wordings, by Abu Ya'la and Tabarani from Ibn 'Umar and by Tabarani from Ibn 'Abbas via an abandoned (matruk) narrator. The wording, "Truly, every thing has a master (sayyid), and the master of gatherings is to face the Qiblah," was transmitted by Tabarani from Abu Hurayrah and declared hasan by Sakhawi, Haythami, Mundhiri, Munawi and others. Bukhari transmitted in his *Al-Adab al-Mufrad* about 'Abdullah b. 'Umar that in most of his sittings, he would be facing the Qiblah, but the narration is not authentic since the isnad contains two weak narrators.

49. Transmitted also by Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Abi Hatim in their tafsirs, and by Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman*. The isnad is fine, since as Shaykh al-Albani has established in some of his works, Abu Ja'far al-Razi's weakness in memory was limited to his narrations from the Prophet (SAWS).

50. This isnad is also fine.

51. Transmitted also by Ibn Majah, Abu Nu'aym and others. The isnad has weakness, but parts of the text were also transmitted by Muslim, Nasa'i and Hakim.

52. Transmitted also by Abu Nu'aym with a good isnad.

53. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and others.

54. The hadith is weak, as confirmed by al-Albani, chiefly because of Humayd, who was declared weak by Busayri and Ibn 'Adi.

55. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim and others.

56. 'Amr al-Bajali did not meet the Companions, so the isnad is munqati' (discontinuous). The text was transmitted also by Ahmad and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, but there is weakness and discontinuity in their isnads also, and a similar text was transmitted from 'Ali with a very weak isnad. The first half of the text was further transmitted from the Prophet (SAWS) by Tabarani and Abu Nu'aym with very weak isnads. The entire text was also transmitted as marfu', but this is a fabricated (mawdu') narration as stated by Dhahabi.

57. The isnad is hasan, if Allah wills.

58. The isnad is hasan, if Allah wills, like the previous one, and Allah knows best.

59. This is a repeat of no. 40 above.

60. Authentic, and transmitted also by Abu Nu'aym and Tabari with stronger isnads.

61. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Tahawi, Ibn 'Asakir, Abu Ya'la, Bayhaqi and Tabarani. Ibn Hajar declared the isnad strong; Albani declared it sahih.

62. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Hakim and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. Declared sahih by Hakim, Dhahabi, Nawawi, 'Iraqi and Albani.

63. All the narrators are reliable, and it was also transmitted by Abu Nu'aym with a hasan isnad. It was also transmitted from the Prophet (SAWS) by Bayhaqi, but this narration is mawdu' (fabricated) according to Albani.

64. The isnad has weakness, but the hadith is sahih, as stated by Haythami and Albani, due to supporting narrations transmitted by Ibn Majah, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Hakim, Bayhaqi and Abu Nu'aym.

65. Ibrahim b. Mahdi and al-'Abbas b. Bakkar al-Dabbi were both known to be liars and fabricators, so the isnad is extremely feeble or spurious (mawdu').

66. The isnad is hasan, and this saying of Ayyub was also transmitted by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr without an isnad, and by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi with a sahih isnad.

67. Transmitted also by Ahmad and his son 'Abdullah, Hakim and Tabarani. The isnad was declared hasan by Haythami, Mundhiri and Albani; the hadith is undoubtedly sahih due to similar narrations transmitted by Ahmad, Bukhari in *Al-Adab*, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Tabarani, Hakim and others.

68. Transmitted also by Ahmad via 'Abdullah b. Lahi'ah. The isnad is weak because of Ibn Lahi'ah, the Egyptian judge whose memory of hadith became confused after his books were burnt.

69. The isnad is sahih. Transmitted also by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. Other narrations clarify what is meant by Abu Salamah (d. 94), for Zuhri said that Abu Salamah used to debate and contend with Ibn 'Abbas.

70. Al-Husayn b. al-Aswad, Layth and Shurayk are all weak, but the same statement was transmitted by Abu Nu'aym with a different, sahih isnad.

71. The text is the same as the previous one (no. 70), but from a different authority. The isnad is weak due to al-Husayn b. al-Aswad, and Mughirah's narrations from Ibrahim are disputed because of his practice of tadlis (concealing his authorities through ambiguous modes of narration).

72. Al-Rifa'i is weak, but this hadith was transmitted by Ahmad with a stronger isnad, and by Hakim, who declared it sahih and Dhahabi agreed.

73. Shurayk b. 'Abdullah is weak, but there are supporting narrations (including no. 72 above) in which the surah involved is named.

74. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Muslim, Ibn Majah, Abu Nu'aym, al-Bazzar and Tabarani.

75. This is mursal via Zuhri since no Companion is named, and was also transmitted thus by Ibn Nasr and Ibn al-Mubarak. Due to other supporting narrations (see no. 76 below), Albani authenticated the narration.

76. Transmitted also by Bayhaqi, Isbahani, Bazzar, Tammam and Diya', and partially by Ibn Majah; authenticated by Albani. Some of these narrations are marfu', others are mawquf but effectively marfu' since they speak about a matter of the Unseen.

77. The isnad to Imam Ahmad is sahih. Ibn Rahwayh's statement refers to the sahih hadith of Malik's Muwatta', "None should touch the Qur'an except the pure (tahir)."

78. The isnad to Imam Ahmad is sahih. Ibn Hani' related that he asked Imam Ahmad about reciting from the mushaf when not in a state of ritual purity, to which he replied, "There is no harm in it. If you turn the pages with a stick or the end of your sleeve, there is no harm in it."

79. An authentic narration if Allah wills, despite some uncertainty about al-Mushrif b. Aban. A similar matter is transmitted from Mujahid.

80. The isnad is sahih.

81. Transmitted also by Malik, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

82. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Tahawi, Ibn Khuzaymah, Hakim, Ibn Hibban, Daraqutni and others. Authenticated by Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, Hakim, Dhahabi, Ibn al-Sakn, 'Abd al-Haqq, Baghawi and Ibn Hajar. However, the isnad is weak according to Shafi'i, Bayhaqi, Nawawi, Mundhiri, Albani and Mustafa al-A'zami because of 'Abdullah b. Salamah, whose memory had deteriorated by the time he transmitted this hadith in old age, as confirmed by Shu'bah, Ahmad, Bukhari and Ibn Hajar himself. There are other narrations that support the view of the majority of the people of knowledge, including the Four Imams, that a person in a state of minor ritual impurity may recite from the Qur'an but not touch a mushaf.

83. Transmitted also by Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Daraqutni. The isnad is weak because of Isma'il b. 'Ayyash, whose ahadith from the people of 'Iraq and Hijaz are rejected as stated by Bukhari, and here he transmits from a Hijazi. The hadith is confirmed as being weak by Abu Hatim, Ahmad, Bayhaqi, Ibn Hajar and Albani. How-ever, the same statement is authentically reported from several Companions, including 'Umar, 'Ali and Ibn 'Umar, and is the position of the majority of the Muslim jurists, including the Four Imams; the Malikis except the menstruating woman from this ruling if she fears that she will forget portions of the Qur'an. A minority of the people of knowledge allow a man or woman in a state of major impurity to recite the Qur'an, and these include Ibn 'Abbas, Bukhari, Ibn al-Mundhir, Tabari and the Zahiris.

84. Transmitted also by Ibn al-Mubarak, Ibn Nasr, 'Abd al-Razzaq, Tabari, Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Abi Hatim with sahih isnads.

85. The narrators in the isnad are all trustworthy, and similar statements have been transmitted from Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid and Suddi. The explanation is confirmed by the hadith of Bukhari and Muslim in which the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) compared guidance and knowledge to rain falling upon the earth.

86. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Hakim, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban and Bayhaqi. Authenticated by Hakim but declared weak by Dhahabi and Albani due to the discontinuity in the isnad between Isma'il and Fudalah.

87. Transmitted also by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Hakim, Darimi, Daraqutni, Tabarani, Ibn Sa'd and Abu Nu'aym on the authority of several Companions, with different isnads ranging from the sound to the spurious. Some of the Imams of Hadith, including Ayyub al-Sakhtiani, explained it as meaning, "Beautify your voices with the Qur'an," based on the view that the Qur'an is above being beautified further by the human voice; rather, the human voice may be beautified by the Qur'an. This explanation was disputed by other Imams, who argued that it effectively reverses, and thus changes, the words of the Prophet (SAWS): the Qur'an comprises words and meanings, and a beautiful voice adorns the words, enabling the meanings to have a deeper effect on the heart.

88. The isnad to Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal is sahih. His son Salih (b. 203 H) left Baghdad when he became Qadi of Isbahan, where he died in Ramadan 266 H at the age of 63.

89. The isnad is weak due to the weakness of 'Abdullah b. Ja'far and Ibrahim [b. Isma'il], as stated by Haythami and Mundhiri. However, it has supporting narrations transmitted by Ibn Nasr, Bayhaqi, Khatib, Ibn al-Mubarak, Darimi, Tabarani and Abu Nu'aym. Thus it was authenticated by Diya' al-Maqdisi and Albani.

90. This is mursal from Zuhri, and is one of the supporting narrations for no. 89 above.

91. Transmitted also by Ibn Majah, Ibn Nasr and Bayhaqi. The isnad is very weak since Abu Rafi' Isma'il b. Rafi' is abandoned (matruk), as confirmed by Haythami, Mundhiri and Albani. Baghawi transmitted a supporting narration; however this also has a very weak narrator. As for the portion, "He is not of us, the one who does not chant (or melodiously recite) the Qur'an," it is a sahih hadith transmitted by Bukhari, Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Hibban and Hakim.

92. Transmitted also by Tabarani, Abu Ya'la and Abu Nu'aym. The hadith is very weak, as Albani said, because all the isnads include Isma'il al-Riyahi and 'Awn b. 'Amr. The former narrator was declared weak by Ibn 'Adi, Abu Ya'la and Bazzar, whilst the latter was declared weak by 'Uqayli and "rejected, unknown" by Bukhari.

The question and answer from Ibn Abi Mulaykah was transmitted by Abu Dawud with a hasan isnad. The interpretation given by Waki' and Ibn 'Uyaynah was transmitted from them by Abu Dawud with a sahih isnad. Their view was rejected by Mundhiri, Ibn Kathir and others based on the hadith of Abu Hurayrah mentioned by Ajurri, although their interpretation is acceptable linguistically. This hadith was transmitted by Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and Nasa'i.

93. Transmitted also by Ibn Abi Shaybah, 'Abd b. Humayd, Ibn Mani', Ibn Nasr, Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Abi Hatim. Busayri declared Ibn Mani's narration to be weak because of the very weak memory of Ibn Abi Layla. Similar narrations have been transmitted from Mujahid, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Sa'id b. Jubayr and 'Ali. A marfu' narration has even been transmitted, but with a feeble isnad.

94. The isnad is sahih.

95. The isnad is sahih. A similar statement regarding the Surahs al-Zilzal and al-Qari'ah was transmitted by Ibn al-Mubarak, Abu Nu'aym and Ibn Nasr from Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazi with a hasan isnad.

96. The isnad is sahih.

This completes the analysis of the ahadith of the book.

Praise be to Allah, by Whose Grace righteous actions are completed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. 'Abdullah, Abu Bakr al-Ajurri, Scholar of Hadith and Law, pious Imam and trustworthy Follower of the Sunnah, was born around 264 or 280 H in Baghdad, where he was raised and educated before teaching Hadith there. He remained in Baghdad until the year 330 H, when he performed the pilgrimage to Makkah. He settled in the holy city and stayed there for thirty years, dedicated to worship and the teaching of Hadith until his death in 360 H.

Al-Ajurri had at least eighty illustrious teachers, including famous Imams and Hadith-preservers, and taught dozens of distinguished students from all over the Islamic lands, especially during his stay in Makkah. His teachers included al-Firyabi and Abu Bakr b. Abu Dawud al-Sijistani, son of the famous scholar of Hadith. His students included Abu Nu'aym of Isfahan, author of the Hilyah al-Awliya' ("Ornament of the Saints").

Al-Ajurri compiled at least forty works, including many that have been published several times in the original Arabic.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Character of the Bearers and People of the Qur'an discusses the required manners and character of those who preserve, recite and believe in the Qur'an, thus including all Muslims in general. The book is divided into ten chapters. Most of the material is of two types: quotations and admonitions. The quotations are from the Qur'an, Sunnah and words of the Companions and the Salaf; the admonitions have been composed by the author on the basis of the quotations, to address the reader directly and guide him to righteousness and virtue.

Al-Ajurri's book is regarded as one of the principal sources in its subject-matter, being one of the very first works to comprehensively address the required manners and character of the people of the Qur'an. Al-Qur'an Society is pleased to introduce this book and its author to an English readership for the first time, by the Grace of Allah.

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